

UC-NRLF



\$B 269 997

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Class





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

LIBERALISM

BOOKS FOR POLITICIANS.

PRESENT IRISH QUESTIONS. By W. O'CONNOR MORRIS, author of 'The Campaign of 1815,' etc. Demy 8vo, cloth, 12s. 6*d.* net.

IRELAND AND THE EMPIRE. By T. W. RUSSELL, M.P. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

WRECKING THE EMPIRE. By JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

PATRIOTISM AND EMPIRE. By JOHN M. ROBERTSON. (Third edition.) Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6*d.*

TRUSTS AND THE STATE. By H. W. MACROSTY. Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 5s.

PATRIOTISM AND ETHICS. By J. G. GODARD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF JINGOISM. By J. A. HOBSON. Crown 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6*d.*

DRIFTING. (Third edition.) Crown 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6*d.*

LONDON :
GRANT RICHARDS.

LIBERALISM

AN ATTEMPT TO STATE

THE PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS OF
CONTEMPORARY LIBERALISM
IN ENGLAND

BY

HERBERT SAMUEL, M.A.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

THE RT. HON. H. H. ASQUITH, K.C., M.P.



LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS

1902

JN 1129
.L552

RECEIVED
JUN 11 1952

INTRODUCTION

BY THE

RT. HON. H. H. ASQUITH, K.C., M.P.

INTRODUCTION

THIS volume appears to me to supply a much-felt want, by presenting, in a form at once comprehensive and compact, a restatement of Liberal principles in their application to the most urgent problems of contemporary politics.

A political party with great traditions and a venerable past carries with it a load of splendid but sometimes embarrassing memories. Its past records can always be made to furnish more or less effective ammunition to critics with a deficient sense of historical perspective. If it has within it a spring of real vitality, it must be constantly refashioning its weapons and shifting its camp. The process is generally gradual, sometimes so slow as to be for a long time almost imperceptible. But when the change at last becomes apparent even to the dullest witted, nothing is so natural to a certain class of opponents as to assail the new position with a fusillade of great names and old watchwords. What would Mr. Fox have said? What would have been the attitude of Mr. Cobden? What about the principles of 1832 or 1880? And so on.

It requires a cool head and a clear vision to disentangle the essential continuity of ideal and spirit, which preserves the identity of a political party, in its prosecution from time to time of particular measures and

policies. The ground, every inch of which has been stoutly contested, and won with difficulty, by the fighters of one generation, becomes, in the next, the common property of the successors of both sets of combatants. The struggle is then transferred to a new theatre of war to which, perhaps, both the methods and the "cries" of the last are inappropriate. And so the process goes on with a bewildering variety and confusion, which makes it often difficult at first sight to say whether what, in the dialect of politics, is called a "new departure," is a development or an abandonment of old principles. There is a consistency of the letter which sterilizes and kills. The identity which we are entitled to look for must be one which is compatible with the strategical and tactical exigencies of men who have to live and work not *in Platonis republica* but *Romuli in faece*.

The Liberal party is often, and looking to its achievements in the past century some of us think justly, styled the party of Progress. When that title is claimed for it, it is not of course with the intention of suggesting that the Conservative party has remained stationary. Regarded as political landmarks, Beaconsfield was probably as far removed from Eldon as Gladstone was from Fox. Liberals and Conservatives alike, under pain of death, must contribute to and keep pace with the flowing current of the national life. But it is none the less true that, upon the whole, the attitude of the two parties to the series of social and political transformations, in which, on its external side, Progress consists, has been, in the one case, an attitude of hopefulness, of faith, of confidence, and, in the other case, an attitude of suspicion, of reluctance, of compulsory resignation. In the sphere of legislation it has

fallen to the lot of the Conservative party to be officially responsible for the enactment of some of the most revolutionary changes of the 19th century; as in 1846 in regard to Free Trade, in 1867 in regard to the Suffrage, in 1891 in regard to Free Education. But in each case they were in fact registering not a triumph but a surrender. The pioneer work had been done by Liberals, and they, unlike the ostensible authors of the change, looked upon it not only without apprehension, but with the exultation of justified faith and realized hope. It is the being possessed at all times by this temper and spirit, rather than the possession at any particular moment of a carefully catalogued creed or programme, that constitutes the mark of the party of Progress.

It may seem a truism to say that the Liberal party inscribes among its permanent watchwords the name of Liberty. That this should sound like a commonplace is another illustration of the penalties of success. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association and combination, which we in these latter days have come to look upon as standing in the same category as the natural right to light and air, were in point of fact privileges long denied, slowly attained, and hardly won. But Liberty itself, like so many of the rallying cries in the secular struggle of parties, is a term which grows by what it feeds on, and acquires in each generation a new and larger content. To the early reformers it was a symbol of antagonism and almost of negation; it meant the removal of fetters, the emancipation both of individuals and of the community from legal and constitutional disabilities. The abolition of religious tests, the opening up of municipal corporations and

the magistracy, the recognition of the legal status of Trades Unions (to take only a few illustrations) were all steps on the road to the peaceful obliteration of feudal and mediæval privileges, which, elsewhere, have been violently submerged beneath the irresistible and often devastating influx of a revolutionary tide. These things no longer admit of argument, but with the growth of experience a more matured opinion has come to recognize that Liberty (in a political sense) is not only a negative but a positive conception. Freedom cannot be predicated, in its true meaning, either of a man or of a society, merely because they are no longer under the compulsion of restraints which have the sanction of positive law. To be really free, they must be able to make the best use of faculty, opportunity, energy, life. It is in this fuller view of the true significance of Liberty that we find the governing impulse in the later developments of Liberalism in the direction of education, temperance, better dwellings, an improved social and industrial environment ; everything, in short, that tends to national, communal, and personal efficiency.

Liberalism, lastly, claims to have been and to be in a special sense the creed of Democracy. We are, of course, all Democrats now. No one proposes to go back to pocket boroughs and a restricted suffrage. Nor will the most hardened optimist contend that the process of constitutional development has reached its limit. Many of the steps that have been taken in the past have been confessedly empirical ; though none so nakedly opportunist as the cynical "leap in the dark" on which an "educated party" ventured under the guidance of Mr. Disraeli in 1867. But the Liberal policy in relation to political change, though at times fit-

fully and half-heartedly followed, has rested upon settled principles. Democracy has not been pursued as an academic ideal, on the theory (which is demonstrably false) that all men are naturally equal, or in the belief (which is frequently contradicted by experience) that the voice of the majority is necessarily the voice of wisdom and justice. The great Liberals of the past were Democrats upon sounder, or at any rate more practical grounds. First, because the substitution, as between individuals and classes, of the "open door" for artificial divisions and grades, is the only way in which the community can be sure of making the most from time to time of its available resources in talent and character. Next, because popular government is the best means in the long run of securing the subordination of particular interests to the common good. Thirdly, because a broad foundation of power means a correspondingly wide diffusion of responsibility, and therefore affords the most effective safeguard for social and political stability. Here again old principles have to be applied to new conditions. For the first time in history a Democracy has become a World-Power.

H. H. ASQUITH.

January 1902.

LIBERALISM
ITS PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS

PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to give, in compact form, an account of the leading principles on which the action of the Liberal party is based, a survey of the measures it advocates, and a summary of the chief facts and arguments that support its policy. The book makes little claim on the attention of political experts. It is intended rather for those who, having made no minute and laborious study of the problems of modern politics, may find a concise statement of the acknowledged aims of one of the great parties not unwelcome as a help to the understanding of current issues.

A statement of this kind has not yet been attempted on behalf of Liberalism. The student has within reach a dozen handbooks describing the principles and purpose of Socialism. But if he wishes to know what are the objects which Liberals have in view, why they seek those objects, and by what roads they try to reach them, he must go to the writers of a generation ago, he must dig in the separate literatures of a score of different subjects, he must read innumerable speeches and innumerable party pamphlets, he must ascertain for himself how much is out of date and what proposals have already been accomplished, he must piece together unaided the facts and views that he has gathered, and discover as best he can the philosophy that underlies them. I have endeavoured to save him some part of this trouble by recording on his behalf the results of such a research.

My aim has not been to express my personal views as to the character of the reforms that are needed ;

but to state only those opinions which a constant intercourse during many years with members of all ranks of the party, and an active participation in the work of almost all its central organizations, have led me to believe are the opinions held by the main body of Liberals. Where differences exist, as on the questions, for example, of compensation for licences or of women's suffrage, I have stated as impartially as may be, both sides of the case.

A wish to keep the book within a readable limit of size has led to the omission of all Scottish, Irish and Welsh questions that are of a strictly local character, of such subjects as the Referendum and the Second Ballot, which have not yet been prominently before the public notice, and of the important, but somewhat abstruse question of the relations, financial and other, between the central government and the local authorities. It will easily be understood, also, that a survey which aims at covering the whole ground of English practical politics must needs be rapid and cannot be minute.

I have to present my grateful acknowledgments to several of my friends for valuable suggestions, particularly to Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, M.P., and Mr. Charles Geake of the Liberal Publication Department, and, above all, to my wife for inestimable help in numerous ways.

CONTENTS

PART I.—INTRODUCTORY.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE FIRST PRINCIPLE	3
II. SOCIAL REFORM	8
III. SOME OBJECTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS	12

PART II.—STATE ACTION.

I. EDUCATION	35
II. HOUSING	46
III. TEMPERANCE	61
IV. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	72
V. THE LAND QUESTION	97
VI. THE DISTRESSED	120
VII. STATE INDUSTRIES: LIBERALISM AND SOCIALISM	145
VIII. TRADE	153
IX. TAXATION	177
X. THE STATE AND RELIGION	207

PART III.—THE CONSTITUTION.

I. DEMOCRACY	225
II. THE FRANCHISE	239
III. THE HOUSE OF COMMONS	254
IV. THE HOUSE OF LORDS	266
V. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT	280
VI. THE MONARCHY	294

PART IV.—IMPERIAL AND FOREIGN POLICY.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. IMPERIALISM OR ANTI-IMPERIALISM?	299
II. DISADVANTAGES OF EMPIRE	301
III. ADVANTAGES OF EMPIRE	311
IV. LIBERALISM AND THE EMPIRE	327
V. FOREIGN POLICY	346
VI. PEACE	355
VII. DEFENCE	363
CONCLUSION	383

PART I
INTRODUCTORY



CHAPTER I

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

115
↑ WE see advertised on the walls that a public meeting will be held on such and such a date under the auspices of some Liberal association. We attend the meeting and listen to the speeches. We hear comments on the political events of the day. We probably hear also a number of definite measures advocated—temperance reform, or laws to secure better housing for the working-classes; the reform of the House of Lords perhaps, or the disestablishment of the Church. Why should proposals of this kind be urged at the meeting?

It is clearly because the speakers hold certain political principles, and believe that these measures will help to realize their principles. They advocate laws to promote temperance and to improve housing because they hold that the State should do what it can to raise the moral and material condition of the people. They advocate a reform of the House of Lords because they believe in the principle of democracy, and the disestablishment of the Church because they believe in the principle of religious equality.

This is plain enough. But why should they hold those principles themselves? The question brings us straightway to the central doctrine of the Liberal creed.

The proposals of Liberalism are fruits, the principles of Liberalism are branches, which are supported and nourished by a single stem. The ideas expressed on the platform and the Bills introduced into Parliament are not an opportunist collection of unconnected schemes,

each advocated because it happens to be popular with some section of electors. They all originate in one motive and spring from one essential doctrine. If we try to express that doctrine in a single sentence, we shall best formulate it perhaps in these words—That it is the duty of the State to secure to all its members, and all others whom it can influence, the fullest possible opportunity to lead the best life.

When we speak of Progress, we mean by progress the enlargement of this opportunity. When Liberals advocate Self-government, it is because Self-government is regarded as a means towards this end. When they raise the cry of Peace, Retrenchment and Reform, it is because peace, retrenchment and reform are held to be parts of the policy by which the State may fulfil this duty. We shall see later that the ideas characteristic of Liberalism—social reform, democracy, freedom of trade, freedom of thought, religious equality, international peace—all ultimately take their rise in this conception of the object of government. The doctrine may, by individuals, be vaguely held. The connection between it and any particular measure proposed in the House of Commons may be very indirect. Nevertheless this stands as the essential principle of the Liberal creed, and unless the supremacy of this doctrine be understood at the outset, all the various measures which we shall be called upon to discuss will seem disconnected, baseless and arbitrary.

Obvious as this principle seems, we cannot assume its truth to be self-evident, and begin at once to discuss what are the conditions necessary to a good life, and how far and in what way the State can help to secure them. We should not be building on firm ground. A few more preliminary words are needed before we can leave theory and come to questions of practical politics.

That the object of a government should be to help its own subjects, and others whom it can influence, to live well is an idea which is held, of course, not only by Liberals. Socialists and many Conservatives would claim that their policies also have this aim in view.

From them the Liberal separates when the cross-roads are reached, and opinions differ as to which path is likely to lead to the common destination. He is divided from them, not by questions of ends, but of methods. But whoever takes a part in political work knows very well that there are not a few politicians who do not accept this view of the purpose of government; not a few, for example, who believe that the chief business of the State is to aggrandize our own country, for the sake of aggrandizement, at the expense of other countries; and a yet larger number who, being themselves members of some privileged class, act as though they thought that the policy of the State should be so framed as to defend above all whatever class privileges happen to exist. It is not the methods through which Liberalism tries to carry out its purpose, but the very purpose itself, which is challenged by these. They deny that our first principle is self-evident; their whole policy is in contradiction to it; and the Liberal, in order to refute them, is obliged to give reasons—and not reasons merely of sentiment or personal taste, for those can carry little conviction—why a voter should base his politics on the doctrine which we have stated, and not on doctrines of a narrow “patriotism” or a narrow self-interest. The Indian sages, when they were asked on what the earth rested, answered that it rested on the back of a great elephant. On what did the elephant rest? On the back of a tortoise. And the tortoise? They could give no further explanation. Liberal proposals are based on certain principles. Those principles are based on the one fundamental doctrine. But is this doctrine itself based on nothing?

The science of politics is built on the science of ethics. The conclusions reached by the moralist form the premises from which the politician starts. “It is the business of the speculative philosopher,” says Burke—and no thinker will dissent from him—“to mark the proper ends of government; it is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means to those ends, and to employ them with effect.” As the builder follows the design traced by the

architect, so government, if it is to follow any consistent plan at all, must follow the design which is received from the hands of the moral law. For there is no other authority superior to government, and no other source from which direction can be obtained.

If the first principle of politics is to be furnished by ethics, it will be clear enough what that first principle must be. Differ as they may in other things, the preachers of every Western religion and the exponents of all the chief schools of modern philosophy agree at least in this one conclusion—the ordinary rule of private morality—that it is the duty of each man to lead, so far as he is able, and to help others to lead, whatever may be held to be the best life. No matter to what faith or school a man may belong, he will not deny the validity of this law.¹ But if this be the duty of the individual, the duty of Society must correspond, must be to aid its own members, and others within its influence, to lead worthy lives; for we cannot imagine a society having an object different from that of the men who compose it. And if such be the duty of Society, it must also be the duty of the State, since the State is nothing else than Society itself organized for purposes of corporate action. Morality teaches, then, that the purpose of the State is to help men, so far as it may be able, to lead their lives in the best way, and a policy which is founded on this rule stands on the firm ground of the moral law. The trunk of the tree of Liberalism is rooted in the soil of ethics.

¹ It is interesting to compare the forms in which this conclusion is expressed by writers belonging to various schools of moral philosophy. *E.g.*: Kant—Preface to the *Metaphysical Elements of Ethics* (translated in Dr. Abbott's *Kant's Theory of Ethics*, p. 296, 1889 edition); T. H. Green—*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 266; F. H. Bradley—*Ethical Studies*, pp. 181, 198, *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 414–15; John Stuart Mill—*Utilitarianism*, p. 17; Henry Sidgwick—*Methods of Ethics*, bk. iii. ch. 14, p. 391; Comte—*Positive Philosophy*, bk. vi. ch. 14 (Harriet Martineau's translation, vol. ii. p. 461), and *The Positivist Catechism* (translated by R. Congreve, pp. 313, 332); Herbert Spencer—*Principles of Ethics*, vol. i. pp. 44, 172; Spinoza—*On the Improvement of the Understanding* (Bohn's edition), pp. 6, 7.

So far by way of introduction. It is enough here to have indicated, very briefly, the principle, and the reason for holding the principle, which permeates Liberalism throughout; to have suggested that all its various proposals—in social reform, in constitutional reform, in Imperial administration, in foreign policy—have one large aim in view, and that the measures advocated at our Liberal meeting have not been chosen without reason or purpose, but may be found to have underlying them, whether the speakers themselves are aware of it or not, a very definite philosophy.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL REFORM

IF we look back at the work of Liberal governments in recent years we shall see that subjects of social reform have gradually been given more and more attention. If we examine the programmes of the party at various dates this tendency becomes still more distinct. And at the present time questions of social reform, questions of education, housing, temperance, the conditions of employment, land, and many more of similar kind, are clearly recognized by the Liberal party to be among the most urgent with which it is called upon to deal. It is compelled to take this view when it comes to treat, in the spirit of its leading principle, the actual conditions of our time and country.

What is meant by the best life? No two men, indeed, would agree on a definition. But differ as we may on the right life as a whole, few would venture to dispute that certain things must always be necessary to it. That health and knowledge and material comfort are essential, this at least no one but an ascetic would deny. But nothing is more certain than that even these, among large sections of the people, are often lacking. It is the poorer classes who are least able to live well. It is poverty and its consequences which, among modern conditions, do most to prejudice health and to limit knowledge, and poverty is the antithesis to a right standard of material comfort. Of all the obstacles which obstruct men's advance towards good living, and of all the evils with which politics can help to deal,

there is no obstacle more formidable and no evil more grave than poverty.

Note the first labourer you meet in the street, remark his habits and imagine his surroundings. Would you say that he possesses in a proper degree these elements of well-being, or that the State has done all in its power to secure them to him? Pass through the working-class quarter of any great town—how many faces will you see that indicate a satisfactory type, and how much in the aspect of the place that would stimulate to good endeavour? One-fifth of the population of the United Kingdom, nearly one-third of the population of its capital, have, according to the ablest authorities, incomes less than the smallest sum which is necessary to ensure a decent subsistence.¹ Eight millions of people are in this case. Some two millions, out of the forty millions of the nation, are driven every year to seek the help of the Poor Law.² Bad housing is one of the surest signs of poverty; eleven per cent. of the inhabitants of England and Wales live in homes that are described in the

¹ This statement rests on the authority of Sir Robert Giffen and of Mr. Charles Booth. Sir Robert Giffen stated in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour, Sitting as a Whole, (question 6942) that 25 per cent. of the adult males of the working-classes are "below the line that one would consider expedient for a minimum subsistence," and this he defines to be the receipt of an income of less than twenty shillings a week; their wages may or may not be supplemented by the earnings of wives and children. Mr. Charles Booth estimates that "the poor" form 30·7 per cent. of the population of London, and by the poor he means those with a family income of twenty-one shillings a week or less, only the highest grade of whom have "means which may be sufficient, but which are barely sufficient, for decent, independent life," and "who are liable to be thrown by any misfortune into extreme distress."—(Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People*; i. 33, ii. 21, ix. 427.) These conclusions have lately been confirmed by a careful investigation into the condition of the people in a typical provincial town, the City of York. It was found that twenty-eight per cent. of the total population of the city were living in extreme poverty. (B. S. Rowntree, *Poverty, A Study of Town Life*, p. 117.)

² *Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom*, 1899; *Local Government Board Return (Poor Law, In-door and Out-door Relief)*, 1892, p. 4; and Charles Booth, *Pauperism*, ch. 6.

census as overcrowded ; in Scotland nearly a fourth of the families live in homes of only one room, nearly two-thirds in homes of not more than two rooms ; in Ireland there were in 1891 a hundred thousand persons who dwelt in houses "built of mud or other perishable material, containing one room with one door and window." ¹ Crime is the child of misery and ignorance ; the fact that over a quarter of a million persons are sentenced to prison every year ² gives some idea of the extent to which misery and ignorance prevail. Suppose, if you will, that our most reliable statisticians have been guilty of exaggeration ; make what allowance you choose for the improvement that may have taken place since these figures were collected ; deduct five, ten, twenty per cent. from each of these totals ; still there will remain sufficient proof that in our own country at the present time there exists a mass of poverty appalling in its magnitude.

But figures in themselves are barren things ; they give only a cold idea of the reality. Let the imagination picture in definite detail the amount of personal suffering which these statistics imply ; let it picture clearly the hardness and the narrowness of the daily lives of all these millions of the poor, and it will be overwhelmed by the vastness of the misery. And how many of our fellow-countrymen there are who, escaping the extreme of poverty, yet fail to reach the level of comfort necessary to happiness, we cannot estimate. How many there are also who suffer from overwork on the one hand, from irregularity of work on the other, how many who suffer from dangerous conditions in their employment or unhealthy conditions in their home, and how many who are broken in spirit and ruined in character by bad surroundings and hopelessness of im-

¹ The figures of housing are taken from the Census of 1891, the returns for 1901 not being published at the time this book is written. (See *The Census of England and Wales*, iv. p. 22 ; of *Scotland*, i. p. xxi ; of *Ireland*, ii. p. 167.)

² *Reports of the Commissioners of Prisons* 1899 ; *England and Wales*, p. 12 ; *Scotland*, p. 14 ; *Ireland*, p. 31.

provement, we have not even statistics to show. The problems arising from poverty are the largest, and are surely the most urgent, with which the nation should seek to deal.

Our first principle leads clearly and directly to a policy of social reform. Whoever admits that the duty of the State is to secure, so far as it is able, the fullest opportunities to lead the best life, cannot refuse to accept this further proposition, that to lessen the causes of poverty and to lighten its effects are essential parts of a right policy of State action. Liberalism recognizes this; measures to this end are prominent among its objects; and in any attempt to state the aims of Liberalism the proposals of social reform must take the first place.

CHAPTER III

SOME OBJECTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

110
BEFORE we proceed, however, to consider one by one the various measures through which Liberals seek to improve the moral and material condition of the people, it is necessary to meet certain objections that are brought against the social reform policy as a whole.

We constantly hear it said that, although there is much distress and much suffering, after all "things are far better than they were," "the working-classes are better off than they have ever been," forces are clearly at work which will gradually bring relief, and there is therefore little reason for the State to trouble itself with the difficult task of social improvement.

1 We hear it said again, by a certain group of political thinkers, that the so-called progressive policy will not, in the long run, bring progress at all, that it is indeed the greatest enemy of progress. Mankind, they say, can only advance in obedience to the universal laws of evolution. There must be no interference with the stern but necessary struggle for existence, through which the unfit are suppressed and the fittest survive to form in later generations a higher type. Those who are at the bottom of society are there because they are the unfit. Lighten their lot and you will be lightening the penalties of weakness and folly; you will be jeopardizing the highest interests of the race at the bidding of an ignorant and mistaken philanthropy.

2

And there are others who urge that, though improvement is desirable, the State would do more harm than good, except in a few rare cases, by trying itself

to effect it. The work must be left to individual effort, to charitable societies, to the Trade Unions, to all the voluntary agencies that are now so numerous. For liberty and self-reliance are of supreme importance to a nation, and "paternal government" cannot fail to lessen liberty and to weaken self-reliance. And if it interferes with industry it will hamper trade, and so diminish the prosperity it would wish to foster.

Unless these objections are answered at the outset they will be raised against us at every stage.

No impartial man would seek to deny that in many respects the condition of the working-classes has greatly improved in recent times. During the last forty or fifty years, in all industries wages have considerably risen, in most industries the working-day has been shortened, the prices of many of the necessities of life have fallen, sanitation has made great strides, and on every hand the opportunities for education, culture and amusement have been vastly enlarged. All this may be admitted. But there is another side to the account which must not be forgotten.

If the working-classes of to-day enjoy many advantages which their fathers were denied, they are subject to many disadvantages from which their fathers were free. If food is cheaper, housing is dearer. If the hours of labour are shorter, the labour itself is often more intense. If there is more leisure, work is more monotonous. The rapid growth of town population has raised rents; it has led, on the one hand, to increased overcrowding, and on the other has compelled large numbers of workmen to make their homes in distant suburbs and to spend time and money in travelling to and from their work. Machinery has conquered almost the whole field of industry; its processes have been continually both "speeded up" and subdivided. The worker has to keep pace with the machine; he is often subject to a more tiring strain; at an earlier age his powers become unequal to the demand made on them,

6 and a man is dismissed as superannuated at a time of life when the easier conditions of the past would have regarded him as still in his prime. The greater intensity of labour has made the difficulties of old age far more acute. And the artizans are now very few who can enjoy that pleasure in their work which is possible to a man who fashions to his liking a complete article. They spend their lives in making over and over again the same fraction of a shoe, the same legs of a chair, feeding with the same invariable movements the same automatic machine. Again, a constantly growing number of the women of the working-class are taken from the duties of the home to engage in industrial work. Clearly the change has not all been gain. If old problems have been partly solved and old evils partly cured, new problems and new evils, hardly less grave, have risen to take their place.

7. And the extent of the progress which has been made can easily be exaggerated. Consider for example the facts of pauperism and crime, the best tests of material and moral condition. The more serious crimes, it is true, are far less numerous than they were, and the number of paupers in proportion to the population has diminished. But the actual number of persons who receive Poor Law relief is the same as it was forty years ago, and the number of persons who are sentenced to prison for all forms of crime is considerably greater than it was forty years ago.¹ To a large extent the progress has been relative and not absolute. Those who are in distress may form a smaller percentage in our increased population,

8 ¹ The number of persons sentenced to penal servitude has gradually fallen from 2,589, the yearly average in the period 1855 to 1859, to 748, the number sentenced in the year 1900. The number per 100,000 of the population has fallen from 13'4 to 2'3. (*Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, 1901.*)

Percentage of paupers to population—

1859 . . . 3'6	1899 . . . 2'5.
----------------	-----------------

Actual number of paupers—

1859 . . . 1,019,000	1899 . . . 1,012,000.
----------------------	-----------------------

(This statement is based on the "one day count." The figures for the year would bear much the same proportion. For Scotland,

but there are as many of them now as there were in the previous generation. If it is said, as some are inclined to say, that the last four or five years of great national prosperity have brought so striking an increase in wages and so remarkable a reduction in the hours of labour that conditions are now completely altered, it must be answered that facts give no support to this view. The most reliable figures, those published by the Board of Trade, show that in the years 1897 to 1900 the average rise of wages, taking the working-classes as a whole, was less than one shilling a week, and considerably less if the coal-miners, who have benefited far the most, be excluded; that in the seven years 1893 to 1900, the average shortening of working time amounted to less than ten minutes a week for each person employed.¹

These considerations are not unimportant. But even if we were to leave them wholly out of account, even if we were to suppose that the advance of the poorer classes had been large and unqualified and that every grade had equally benefited, the fact that social conditions were better than they had been would in no way free us from the duty of actively seeking further progress. We are faced by visible, concrete evils. Are we quietly to tolerate them merely because in the past these evils were greater? We know that the lot

instead of 1859, the year 1860 has been taken, the first year for which the figures are available.)

Persons committed to prison per thousand of population—

1859	6·2	1899	6·2.
----------------	-----	----------------	------

Actual number of persons committed to prison—

1859	177,144	1899	257,509.
----------------	---------	----------------	----------

(See *Judicial Statistics, England and Wales*, 1859, p. xxvi; *The Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, England and Wales*, 1899, p. 10; *Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, Scotland*, 1899, p. 12; *Report of the General Prisons Board, Ireland*, 1898-9, p. 7.) Some part of this increase may no doubt be due to better police supervision; but even if a large allowance were made for this, the figures of ordinary crime would give little evidence of social improvement.

Report of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade on Changes in Rates of Wages and Hours of Labour, 1900, pp. xvi-xix, xxiii.

// of a vast number of the people is unduly hard. Is the matter disposed of by merely saying that their lot once was harder? No optimism is more fallacious than that which says that the present is satisfactory because the past was less satisfactory, and that the shortcomings of to-day are not shortcomings because those of yesterday were greater. Such an argument would protect any abuse, no matter how obvious and how grave, provided only that it had been preceded by a more serious abuse. We have to deal with existing facts. The relation of those facts to the past is wholly beside the mark.

12. Lastly, it is denied that the past improvement, such as it was, can be attributed, and the future improvement that is needed can be left, to any vague automatic force on which we may rely to bring progress, independently of all efforts of ours. "Advance of the age," "evolution of society," "the natural progress of mankind," these are no more than phrases, summarizing the results of human effort. Trace back the causes of the improvement which we thankfully see. They are not obscure. The development of industry and the growth of trade under the protection of a stable government and wise laws; the opening of the ports to foreign food supplies; the spread of education by the direct action of the State; the safeguarding of workmen's interests by a score of Factory Acts, Accidents Acts, Housing Acts; the growth of Trade Unionism and of the Friendly Societies, made possible by favouring legislation—a moment's thought will show that these have been among the most productive springs of social progress. The causes of past advance will be found to lie in no external current carrying human affairs forward on some irresistible stream, but in the continuous toil of individual men, using especially the powers of the State, who have gradually effected numberless detailed changes that finally combine in this single majestic result. Cease legislating, organizing, educating, fostering commerce; social improvement must needs cease also; and the natural force to which we have trusted to perform the work which it was ours

13

to do will prove to be no more than a word, without substance or power.

We turn to the second objection.

14 Granted the need of further progress, to help the inferior types at the expense of the superior is not, it is said, the way to achieve it. Not by such means has man risen from the beasts and ascended step by step the path of civilization, but through a world process of evolution, which, cruel perhaps in its methods, yet most merciful in its results, unsparingly eliminates the weak in order that the race as a whole may advance. "Their carnivorous enemies not only remove from the herbivorous herds the individuals past their prime," says Herbert Spencer, the chief exponent of this doctrine, "but also weed out the sickly, the malformed, and the least fleet or powerful. . . . The well-being of existing humanity, 15 and the unfolding of it into . . . ultimate perfection, are both secured by the same beneficent, though severe discipline, to which the animate creation at large is subject; a felicity-pursuing law which never swerves for the avoidance of partial and temporary suffering. The poverty of the incapable, the distresses that come upon the imprudent, the starvation of the idle, and those shoulderings aside of the weak by the strong, which leave so many in shallows and in miseries, are the decree of a large, far-seeing benevolence." ¹ To lighten the burdens of poverty would be blindly to counteract the great process by which Nature left to herself would 16 ensure the progress of mankind.

There is little doubt that this argument, applied to politics, furnishes an intellectual basis for much of the opposition to social reform.

It implies three things. It implies that the poor are necessarily the unfit; they are the incapable, the imprudent, the idle, the weak. It implies that hard social conditions will crush out the unfit. And it implies that only through such hardship can unfitness be removed.

¹ Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, pp. 322-5 (edition of 1851).

Reformers answer that not one of these implications is justified by the facts around us or by past experience.

17 The poor are not necessarily the unfit. For the most part they have been born into poverty and lack the exceptional qualities which would alone enable them to escape. They may have fallen into "shallows and miseries" through no individual fault, but through ill-health perhaps, the decline of the trade in which they have been trained, the collapse of some institution for thrift, or any one of a score of such causes.¹ Those who are the best acquainted with the poorer classes deny the most strongly that the distressed are always to be condemned as unfit and never to be commiserated as unfortunate. To maintain oppressive conditions at the base of society as the punishment for unfitness is to condemn unjustly 18 to the same distress the unlucky with the bad.

19 Hard social conditions certainly do not crush out the inferior types. There is proof on every side that the unfit are not suppressed. Large numbers of the degraded and incapable do as a matter of fact continue to exist generation after generation ; and this is clearly because the social conscience cannot bear that the hindmost should be left to perish unhelped. Destruction as the penalty for weakness is a punishment too hard to be enforced. The slower fish seized by the heron, or the unwary deer fallen a victim to its enemies, disappears and is heard of no more ; but among men the evolutionary methods of the swamp and the jungle are not, and cannot be, imitated with the completeness which is necessary to their success. The weak may be shouldered aside, the idle may lack food, the imprudent may fall into distress and the incapable into poverty ; society is not rid of them for that. They survive and they propagate. The community, respecting human life, preserves them at least from starvation. And since few would venture to advocate that charity should be forbidden and the Poor Law repealed, unfitness by these means can never be suppressed.

¹ On the extent to which extreme poverty is owing to these causes, see Mr. Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People*, i. 147.

20 But if social conditions are not hard enough to kill, they are still hard enough to maim, and severity, not carried sufficiently far to suppress unfitness, is carried sufficiently far to produce it. We see the idle and the vicious living in slums, uneducated, irregularly employed, with no experience but of unhappiness and no prospect but of destitution, and their condition, we are told, is the due punishment for their faults. But clearly enough, if we examine further, we find that this very squalor, ignorance, irregularity and hopelessness are among the chief causes of the idleness and the vice; that it is low surroundings which breed low character, absence of education which prevents the desire for knowledge, casual labour which creates the type of the casual labourer, hopelessness which brings recklessness, and that now as always "the destruction of the poor is their poverty." The miseries, it seems, which are to be the penalty of unfitness are often themselves the cause of the very faults that they punish. Like those parents who "first whipped their children till they cried and then went on whipping them to make them stop crying," these political Darwinians would first degrade numbers of the people by bad social conditions, and then preserve the bad conditions on the ground that they are the proper punishment for degradation.

2 And to leave unregulated the "natural struggle for existence" is not the only means—if it be a means—by which unfitness can be eradicated. Civilization supplies an alternative for the policy which civilization forbids. Among animals the incapable can only be removed by destruction. Among men the incapable can be removed by curing or preventing incapacity. Penalties no doubt there must be. The workhouse for the idle and drunken, the prison for the criminal, are recognized to be necessary. No one but a communist would suggest that competition should be destroyed, social grades abolished, and all men enjoy an equal comfort regardless of their character and their value to society. But the penalties may be accompanied by help. To extend education, to bring powerful moral influences to bear, to make surroundings

better, to remove the causes that lower the physical type, to give a stimulus to self-improvement by making it easy for men to rise, these, experience proves, are the most powerful means for raising the standard of life and character. That such methods are possible makes the Spencerian policy as unnecessary as it is cruel.

24 When men say, therefore, that we need not vex our minds too much at the sight of the evils that fester at the base of society, for after all the fittest must survive and the unfit go to the wall, reformers answer that you are driving against the wall many who are not unfit, but only unfortunate ; that the unfit are not by these means removed, they still survive as well as the fittest ; that you are taking the surest means of producing fresh generations of weak and incapable ; and that progress can be made by methods more humane, by using the powerful agencies within our reach that tend not to kill but to cure, not to destroy but to raise, that would enlarge the opportunities for becoming fit rather than overwhelm with penalties those who fail. It is not the evolutionary argument which need stay the hand of reform.

25 The State, it is said, lastly, is incompetent to touch these grievances. State interference always fails. Leave men alone and they will find their own way out of their difficulties. Your policy of social reform will weaken self-reliance and cause more evils than it cures.

This was the view in the main of the older school of Liberals. Recent years have brought a striking change.

To many among the fathers of modern Liberalism, government action was anathema. They held, as we hold, that the first and final object of the State is to develop the capacities and raise the standard of living of its citizens ; but they held also that the best means towards this object was the self-effacement of the State. Liberty is of supreme importance, and legal regulation is the opposite of liberty. Let governments abstain from war, let them practise economy, let them provide proper protection against violence and fraud, let them

repeal restrictive laws, and then the free enterprise of commerce will bring prosperity to all classes, while their natural ambitions on the one hand, the pressure of need on the other, will stimulate the hindmost to seek and to attain their own well-being: such was their doctrine. The economics of Adam Smith and the philosophy of Bentham united to found a creed of non-interference which has inspired in large measure the politics of a century. Liberalism became a negative policy, opposing foreign enterprises and entanglements, attacking the laws regulating trade, opinion, combination, land tenure, which had been inherited from a previous generation; its positive proposals were constitutional, aiming at a democratic State structure, and they were constitutional only. If, especially, proposals were made for interfering with the conditions of employment, the Liberals of that generation heard them with suspicion and accepted them, if acceptance was forced by events, with reluctance. In a debate in 1847 on the most important of the Factory Bills, that which proposed to limit the working-day of women to ten hours, Brougham, for instance, in the course of a powerful speech in opposition, said, "I deprecate the interference of the legislature in the contract between master and servant in the factories. . . . I think it wrong to place a limit of twelve hours, still less can I consent to cut it down to ten." Three years later, in another debate on the same test question, Bright declared that he looked upon "the proposition as most injurious and destructive to the best interests of the country, and contrary to all principles of sound legislation." "Look not to Parliament, look only to yourselves," Cobden wrote to the Lancashire operatives. Hume moved the rejection of the Ten Hours' Bill; Roebuck spoke strongly against it; and Sir William Molesworth, Milner Gibson and Miss Martineau were among those who tried to arouse public opinion in opposition to the measure. In the same spirit every proposal of the same character was received, and State interference as a whole was condemned as injurious to commerce and relaxing to character.

Contrast this with the measures of social reform that

were the distinctive work of the Liberal Government of 1892 to 1895. A striking departure from these principles will be seen. That Ministry passed a Local Government Act giving or confirming to local authorities power to acquire land, even without the consent of the owners, and to let it to labourers for cultivation ; power, also, to cause any house they considered unhealthy to be repaired or closed ; power to establish at the public expense a library, baths, a recreation-ground ; power in a score of ways to intervene in the affairs of the inhabitants of the district. It passed a Railway Servants Act which enabled the Board of Trade to hear the complaints of men who were overworked by their employers and to compel those employers to grant whatever the Board considered to be a reasonable standard of hours. It passed an Act giving further facilities to local bodies for borrowing money in order to build houses for the working-classes ; another forbidding parents to send their children to work before the age of eleven years ; a Factory Act that dealt with the amount of air space for each worker in factories, the amount of steam that might be discharged into the atmosphere, the temperature to be maintained, the provision for escape from fire, the number of days in the week and in the year on which women and young persons might be employed overtime, the hours of work and of meals in laundries, the special conditions of dangerous trades and processes, the mode in which employers were to inform their work-people of the rate at which they would be paid, and other matters of even more minute detail. The Ministry introduced a Bill to cause landlords in Ireland to re-admit to their occupation certain tenants whom they had evicted ; another to compel employers to compensate workmen who were injured in life, in limb, or in health during their employment, and to prohibit the parties from "contracting out" of the law ; another reducing the number of hours to be worked by young persons in shops. The majority of the members of the Government supported a Bill limiting the hours to be worked in mines to eight in the day. An Act was passed dealing with

the rates of carriage charged by Railway Companies. A Commission was appointed to consider whether a scheme could be framed for giving State pensions to the aged poor. The ministers used their executive power to raise the wages and shorten the hours of large numbers of men employed by the State, beyond the point which the men would have been willing to accept rather than lose their employment. To secure the proper execution of previous laws, they made more stringent the inspection of factories. Finally they raised the standard of accommodation and of teaching in the public schools already existing. No more complete abandonment of the old theory of negation can be imagined than is shown by this governmental activity, so extensive and so minute.

We naturally seek the causes of the change, and in finding them we shall find also the answer to those who object to it.

In the first place, the State itself has become more competent. Its recent work inspires confidence instead of mistrust. The early Liberals lived under a constitution whose powers had been drawn by means of corruption into the hands of a limited class, and used in defiance of justice to serve the interest of that class. Industry lay at the mercy of a Parliament ignorant of the first laws of political economy, and of a Civil Service and magistracy inefficient for their duties. The State itself unrepresentative, selfish and unintelligent, had fallen into contempt and had become the aversion of thoughtful men.

Now democracy has been substituted for aristocracy as the root principle of the constitution. Court influence and the grosser kinds of corruption have disappeared. Efficient local authorities and an expert Civil Service have been created. The whole machinery of government has been vastly changed and improved. A new system has been called into being—mainly through the efforts of the early Liberals themselves—and the State of to-day is held worthy to be the agent of the community in many

affairs for which the State of yesterday was clearly incompetent.¹

The machinery of government is different, and the difference is seen in its products. That generation had before it as an object lesson a whole series of unwise laws, some of them purposely hostile to the interests of the people, others well-meant but equally injurious. Seventy or eighty years ago, the nation was still oppressed by the Navigation and Corn Laws and the whole system of Protection; by the laws against workmen's combination; by the old Poor Law with its pauperizing doles from the rates in aid of wages; by the heavy penalties laid on religious Nonconformity and on the expression of certain forms of political opinion. Commerce was burdened with heavy taxation for wasteful purposes, and hampered by a multitude of well-intentioned but disastrous restrictions. The supreme need of the hour was a policy of repeal. The struggle to enforce it promised to be severe. The men were few who could look beyond its accomplishment. Now, however, the repeal has been for the most part won; these proofs of what follies a class legislature can commit have been forgotten, and in their place we have the experience of a great code of wise laws, the outcome of democracy, proving that State action can be beneficent in the highest degree. If one of the Philosophic Radicals, who had been a contemporary of Hume and Grote and James Mill, could reappear to observe our politics, he would be as deeply impressed by the contrast between the statute-book of to-day and that with which he had been familiar as by the contrast between the constitution of that day and of this. The laws against which he had fought he would not find; in their room he would see

¹ The word State is used throughout, not in the sense of the Central Government as distinguished from the Local Authorities, but as meaning the whole governing organization, local and central together. The work of a School Board is as much a part of "State action" as the work of Parliament or of the Education Department. This is, of course, the sense in which the term is employed in practically all modern writings on political science.

Factory and Workshop Acts, Mines Regulation Acts, Merchant Shipping Acts, Truck Acts, the great education and sanitary codes—a hundred effective safeguards against danger to health and mind, life and limb, a hundred successful defences against industrial oppression. He would observe the admirable work of the local authorities. And he would find that this system of regulation had not been accompanied by indirect effects for harm, but that with its growth, the productiveness, trade and wealth of the nation had grown also, and to a remarkable extent; that the self-reliance and capacity of the mass of citizens, in the general affairs of life, had visibly increased. He would not wonder that, with this change before them in the character of legislation, men had formed a new opinion of the capabilities of the State.

In the second place, while these experiments in legislation were modifying opinion by their success, the social conscience was becoming more fully awake to the urgent need of improvement, and the inability of the *laissez faire* policy to bring it about was gradually becoming more plain.

The growing wealth of the commercial and landed classes had thrown the facts of poverty into sharper relief. Carlyle and Ruskin by their passionate denunciations, Dickens and George Eliot by their appeals to sentiment, and a crowd of lesser writers following the same paths, contributed to make the nation realize that here was a cause of shame. And the working-classes themselves, organized in Trade Unions and at last enfranchised, were able to command the attention which had been denied to their silent suffering.

The widespread eagerness for social progress which was so marked a feature of the nineteenth century, and particularly of the latter half of it, rebelled against the slow and doubtful methods of *laissez faire*. The restrictive laws, which the individualists declared to be the chief barriers to improvement, had been repealed. But the condition of the poorer classes seemed in many respects to be hardly at all the better. A stern ex-

perience was fast convincing the people that "the free play of enlightened self-interest," on which the Manchester School wholly relied to bring progress, was a force insufficient for the needs of the case; that the "self-reliance and enterprise" of the working-classes were faced by barriers too formidable to be conquered without help. Inefficiency and distress, bad conditions of work, a low standard of living, were still obvious on every hand. The nation would not be induced by the distant promises of the theorists to allow further generations to be sacrificed in the attempt to cure these maladies by leaving them alone.

Another influence was also at work. So far as questions of labour regulation were concerned, there was arising a new doctrine of the true meaning and the best guarantees of liberty. It was urged that legal restrictions might after all be made to extend rather than to limit freedom, and would often stop more compulsion than they imposed.

Because the law does not interfere with his actions a man is not necessarily free. There is economic restriction as well as legal restriction. If the tramway conductor agrees to serve twelve hours a day for thirteen days out of fourteen, we cannot say that, because no law compels him, he does this of his own choice. The industrial system irresistibly bends to its will all who form part of it; the workman must submit to the customs of his trade and workshop under penalty of dismissal; liberty to "go elsewhere" is an empty privilege when the conditions are everywhere the same; and the individual finds that he is hardly more free to decide, as an individual, the conditions of his own employment than a passenger is able to leave a train running at full speed or to alter its pace.

Even trade unionism, it was said, fails to establish a true freedom of contract in industry. Its area is limited. The lower grades of labour seem incapable of forming stable and effective organizations. Membership in a union may often entail sacrifices that average men are not prepared to make. Mutual distrust destroys many

combinations.¹ Moreover, where they are strongest, the unions are often too weak to cope with the concentrated force of capital, and in set battles find themselves out-matched again and again. And finally they are frequently unable to secure the redress of minor grievances—bad sanitation in the workshop, dangerous machinery, and so forth—because the strike is the sole weapon which their armoury contains, and only great questions justify the use of an instrument as destructive to the workers as it is injurious to the trades. In spite of their great achievements, trade unions have been found inadequate to safeguard the freedom of the working-classes against the overwhelming force of economic pressure.

Therefore, it was argued, the State must intervene in the interest of liberty itself. As the law prohibiting duelling provided the only means of escape from an oppressive social custom and enlarged freedom by means of restriction, so labour legislation is often the only means of rescue for those who are subject to oppressive industrial customs.

Such was seen to be its results in practice. The Act, for example, which limited to ten in the day the number of hours to be worked by women in factories was in form rigidly restrictive. But in effect it was liberating; it freed the women from the compulsion to which they were unwillingly subject, and from which they could not otherwise escape, of working twelve hours or fourteen. Not State interference, but State assistance, is the true name for such legislation.

No doubt there are occasions on which laws of this kind do coerce persons against their will. It may be

¹ Even in our day, after long years of organizing effort, no less than three-fourths of the working-men, and a still larger proportion of the women, remain non-unionists. (For number of the working-classes, see Sir Robert Giffen's evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour (Sitting as a Whole), 6913; an addition must be made to the figures there given on account of the subsequent increase of population. For the number of trade unionists see the *Report of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade on Trade Unions*, 1900, p. xiii.)

that if the women employed in those trades in which they are subject, while men are not so subject, to loathsome diseases, were polled on the question whether they should be excluded by law from those trades, their answer would be in the negative. They do not fully appreciate the danger they are in. They know of no alternative occupation, and are not aware that if they were forced to seek they would soon find one. In these cases the State is obliged deliberately to invade their freedom of choice, just as it invades the freedom of would-be suicides or habitual drunkards; and it is justified in so doing because it knows, what ignorance hinders these women from knowing, that their true and ultimate freedom can be found only by engaging in work that gives safety to life and health. And no doubt in almost every case there are some employers and work-people who accept the existing conditions, who see no harm, and perhaps some profit, in long hours of work, for instance, or unhealthy surroundings. When the coercion of these few is the only means of preventing the coercion by them of the many, restrictive laws, it was said, are justified. If, for example, a majority of shopkeepers and assistants are forced to be at their business longer than they wish, through the competition of a small number who refuse to close at early hours, it is surely better that the majority should impose their will on the minority by means of a law, especially as it is for the ultimate good of all, than that the minority should, through their economic power, impose their will on the majority to the common detriment. One party or the other must give way. It is better that the few should give way rather than the many. Legal coercion in such a case increases the sum-total of freedom.

On these grounds it was urged that to support a policy of State regulation in industry is quite consistent with a belief in liberty, and not merely consistent with it but rather to be regarded as its necessary consequence.

Three causes, then, combined to convert Liberalism from the principle of State abstention. Three causes made possible the adoption of a programme such as that

of the recent Liberal Government. It was seen that the State had become more efficient and its legislation more competent, and laws of regulation were found by experiment neither to lessen prosperity nor to weaken self-reliance in the manner foretold. It was realized that the conditions of society were in many respects so bad that to tolerate them longer was impossible, and that the *laissez faire* policy was not likely to bring the cure. And it was realized that extensions of law need not imply diminutions of freedom, but on the contrary would often enlarge freedom.

Such are the facts and arguments which brought about this change. In them we find the answer to those who use the doctrine of the old Liberalism to attack the policy of the new. The State is not incompetent for the work of social reform. Self-reliance is a powerful force, but not powerful enough to cure unaided the diseases that afflict society. Liberty is of supreme importance, but State assistance, rightly directed, may extend the bounds of liberty.

While Liberals hold that the State can do much, they are far from supposing, however, that the State can do all. Government may be more able to ensure progress than was formerly supposed, but its powers are not unlimited.

Of the social problems that face us, some are too vast for laws to be able to solve, some are too subtle and intangible, some depend too much on moral causes. Legislation dealing with industry can be so framed, indeed, that it will not injure liberty and self-reliance; but if it be pushed beyond a certain point it undoubtedly will injure liberty and self-reliance. Moderate reforms may help commerce and increase prosperity; extreme reforms would destroy commercial confidence, stop the investment of capital and destroy prosperity. There are boundaries beyond which State action cannot go.

Where it halts, other agencies take up the work.

Politicians are not the only reformers. Trade Unions, Friendly Societies, Co-operative Societies, Temperance Societies, numberless forms of voluntary association from the great Churches down to the humblest village institute, help in securing progress. Public opinion plays a powerful part to the same end. Above all, the unrelenting, unaided energy of individuals, in their business, in their own development, in personal influence on the lives of others, the self-reform especially of the suffering classes themselves, these are the strongest of all forces to lead the community forward. To them a large, and no doubt the larger, part of the task of social reform must of necessity be entrusted.

There is a line, then, between the sphere of State action and the sphere of private action. But can this line be described in words? Search as we may, we shall never find a single formula which will cover all cases of legitimate State action and exclude all cases of illegitimate State action. The engineer might as well try to define by a general statement the boundaries between the sphere of machine labour and the sphere of hand labour, as the politician try to define the boundaries between the province of the State and the province of private action. The only acceptable rule is that of Jevons: "The State is justified in passing any law, or in doing any single act, which, without ulterior consequences, adds to the sum-total of human happiness."¹ And this is far too indefinite a rule to be of any use whatever as a guide in practical politics.

Yet there are certain vague general principles, rarely disputed, which must always influence the statesman.

Only in extreme cases, such as the case of the unhealthy trades, may the State use coercion except as a means of directly enlarging liberty. The law should not do for the individual that which he might do for himself without undue delay or an undue expenditure of energy; for otherwise self-reliance would be weakened.

¹ W. S. Jevons, *The State in Relation to Labour*, p. 13; cf. John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, bk. v. ch. 1, § 2.

Distress must not be relieved in such a way as to encourage thriftlessness and burden the industrious for the benefit of the wilfully idle or vicious. If industry is touched it must be with a cautious hand, and so as not to lessen the volume of national trade. The laws must not discriminate between individuals. They must be such as can be practically enforced. They must not be of a kind to cause revolutionary disturbance. Examine the various measures which are now advocated by Liberals, and it will be found that it is these common-place rules that chiefly decide their character. These vaguely fix the practical limits of State interference.

From time to time the State undertakes fresh duties. As new wants arise, and as government becomes more efficient, the province of State action is gradually enlarged. For this reason the Liberal programme of to-day is very different from that of a century ago. It makes no claim to finality. Liberalism, indeed, is no stereotyped collection of fixed proposals. It is a living force that applies itself in turn to all the changing phases of national life, in ways conditioned by the character and the customs of the people. As times alter, the proposals of Liberalism must alter as well. Of the measures which we are about to discuss, some cannot fail to be sooner or later carried into law ; they will be replaced by others. Some perhaps will be superseded in time by better proposals along similar lines. But although programmes change and the practical aims of each generation of Liberals must needs be different from those of its predecessor, the root ideas that underlie them all, the doctrine that the State exists in order to help men to live well, the belief that it is able, within certain limits and among other agencies, to lighten the burdens which poverty imposes and to do much in other ways to enlarge the opportunities for right living—these fundamental ideas are not transitory and will not soon change.

PART II
STATE ACTION

115-21

CHAPTER I

EDUCATION

MANY considerations unite to make education a subject of the first political importance.

If we have democracy we must have schools. Although political capacity does not wholly, or even chiefly, depend on learning, although shrewd common-sense is a quality more valuable in an electorate than scholarship, nevertheless the better the people are educated the more likely is a self-governing constitution, such as our own, to be attended with success. A wise State will seek to educate its citizens because education in the citizens brings in its turn more wisdom to the State.

A generous system of education, again, enlarges the field from which the nation's servants in the higher domains of thought and action may be drawn. Ability is not so plentiful that we can afford to leave untapped the greater number of its sources, to allow any Milton or Hampden to remain mute and inglorious, or any Giotto to be left "obscure among the hill-shepherds." The theory, often used as an argument against extending the machinery of State education, that genius cannot fail, that talent will come to the front in spite of all obstacles, that the classes which seldom produce great men must consequently have little of the stuff of which great men are made, and that therefore the State will find little gold by sinking its educational shafts into the lowest strata of the population, should not mislead us. For it is a theory that is proved by no evidence, and can never be proved by evidence. The only genius and

ability that we know are those that prosper, and if any remain crushed by adversity or latent through want of opportunity, the very fact of their failure and obscurity prevents us from taking them into account. But it would indeed be strange, if the poorer classes, merely because they were poorer, had less than their fair share of natural talent; and when we read the biographies of those rare great men who have sprung from humble origins, and mark the difficulties and dangers in their early careers which, often by good luck or chance assistance, they succeeded in overcoming, we cannot help believing that there must have been many others among the millions of the poor who had in them capacities for greatness but fell into one or other of the pitfalls which these more fortunate were able to escape. The fact that comparatively so few men have risen from the working-classes to intellectual distinction, of itself points to the probability that much talent runs to waste. In all the long list of practicable reforms there is none, perhaps, which promises a larger increase in the real greatness of our country than the raising of educational ladders up which the clever children of indigent parents may climb to the higher levels of service.

And if a sound system of education enables society to make use of its best, at the other extreme it enables society to get rid of its worst. On the one hand education develops those who can be of help; on the other it prevents the development of those who can be of injury. To increase the number of schools results in lessening the number of prisons, and the State is interested in encouraging education if only as the means of obviating crime.¹

If a nation is to be wealthy it must be successful in trade; it will not be successful in trade if its workers

¹ From the *Report of the Prison Commissioners for England and Wales* (1901, p. 15), it appears that of persons committed to prison, those who can neither read nor write, or can read and write only imperfectly, are 95·0 per cent.; those who can read and write well are 4·1 per cent.; and those who are of superior education are 0·05 per cent.

are ignorant. In modern commerce the competition is keener than ever before, the organization is more intricate, the processes of manufacture are more delicate. The new conditions require a high standard of intelligence on the part of all who are engaged in industry, and a high standard of manual skill. Intelligence can only be developed by a good general education. Manual skill can best be developed by a good technical education; and this in turn is a further argument for instructing the people in general knowledge, for any teacher in a technical school will bear witness that those pupils profit little from his teaching who have not first been thoroughly instructed in the elementary schools. The fact is being more and more realized by the British people that it will not be able to hold its vast trade and maintain its prosperity unless efforts are made to develop the mental capacity of the industrial classes, equal to the efforts which are now being made by the nations who are its rivals in commerce.

Education has yet another claim, more direct and not less weighty than these. The purpose of Society is to create, not merely capable electors, useful servants, law-abiding subjects and skilful workers; its purpose is to create a high type of men. Even if the schools had no constitutional or restraining value, they would still be valuable. Even if they had no commercial value, they would still be valuable. In Mr. Herbert Spencer's words, "it is a mistake to suppose that life is for working instead of working for life." An educated man has interests more wide, pleasures more numerous and more worthy, than one who is ignorant; he stands on a higher level; he is able to lead a finer life; and if the object of our policy is to extend opportunities for right living, we find a direct means to the end in extending opportunities for education.

But the teaching that is needed is too expensive a thing for the individual to provide unaided. The labourer cannot spare even so little as the two or three pounds a year which is the present cost of the elementary schooling of each child; secondary teaching is still

further beyond his reach, and is beyond the reach of the majority of parents who are above the rank of the labouring classes. There are now-a-days few "pious founders" of educational institutions, and even if they were numerous, private purses could never supply the many millions that are annually needed to meet the demand. So the duty of maintaining the schools must inevitably fall to the State.

These, then, are the reasons which have led Liberalism to become, as it is, and as it has been throughout its recent history, the staunch champion of a system of State education, at once universal, efficient and generous, complete in all its grades, covering all branches of learning, and accessible from the lowest schools to the highest to the clever children of every class.

But whoever is acquainted with the working of the present State system of education in England is aware that it has many and grave deficiencies.¹

With respect to the elementary schools, there is first the evil of irregular attendance. Ostensibly the law compels all parents to send their children to school. But the compulsion is, in large measure, ineffective. If the children are not sent, little is done. School Attendance Committees are often loth to prosecute; when they prosecute, the magistrates are often unwilling to convict; when they convict, the fine imposed is too small to have any real effect; in any case steps are seldom taken until the offence has continued for some weeks or months. Parents who are neglectful, or who wish to profit in their purses by sending the children to work as wage-earners, are frequently able to shirk their duty with impunity; and of the five-and-three-quarter million children on the books of the schools, over a million, on the average, are

¹ The question of technical education, and the question of religious teaching and of the conflict between Board and Voluntary Schools, are briefly discussed in the later chapters on *Trade* and on *Religious Equality*. (See pp. 172, 217.)

found to be absent every day.¹ It is not through illness or stress of weather that the majority of these are away. The teachers know that it is practically the same children who attend irregularly week after week and year after year—"the children of thriftless, careless, dissolute parents, the children who need the succour of the schools most of all."²

Secondly, the children are taken from school too young. The majority end their education at the age of twelve; a considerable number at the age of eleven.³ The instruction that is limited to so few years, and stops at the time when the pupils are best able to profit by it, cannot be expected to sink very deep, and it is not strange that so many should be found in later years to have forgotten almost all of the little that they had learnt.

And large numbers of those who still attend school are not allowed to give the whole of their energies to the work of learning. Above the age of twelve many spend half of each week in factory employment. At all ages many are made to work as wage-earners in various occupations before, between and after school-hours; a practice which prevents their obtaining proper recreation and sends them to their lessons physically exhausted.⁴

¹ The figures quoted in this section are taken, except when otherwise stated, from the *Annual Return of the Board of Education* 1901, or from the analysis of that *Return* published as a supplement to *The Schoolmaster*, the organ of the National Union of Teachers, June 1, 1901. In this supplement of *The Schoolmaster* will be found a large number of extracts from the reports of the Inspectors of Schools proving the gross neglect of local authorities and of magistrates in failing to enforce the attendance laws.

² *The Schoolmaster*, *Ibid.* p. 958.

³ There are on the rolls 612,453 scholars between the ages of 10 and 11.

Of these 25,000 leave before they are 11 years old.

66,000	"	"	12	"
302,000	"	"	13	"
164,000	"	"	14	"

Only 53,465, or about one-twelfth, continue in the schools after their fourteenth birthday. (*Education Department Return for* 1900, p. 20.)

⁴ At least 144,000 children who are supposed to attend school full

No wonder that these little toilers—nearly forty thousand of them are under the age of ten—are often found asleep at their desks, and prove wholly unable to learn.

Further, many of the schools are under-staffed. Taking England and Wales as a whole there is only one adult teacher on the average to every forty-one children. It is obvious that the consequent excessive size of the classes must tend to make the instruction mechanical and ineffective, and to weaken what should be one of the most powerful of educative forces, the personal influence of the teacher on the individual pupil. And not only are the teachers insufficient in number, but hardly more than one-half—apart altogether from the pupil-teachers—are trained and certificated. The standard of the profession is lowered by inadequate salaries.¹ Moreover, capable men are deterred from becoming teachers in denominational schools by the fact that they would hold their positions at the will of self-appointed boards of management, and be liable to capricious dismissal at any moment without right of appeal.

A child who has been taught, as one of a class of forty or fifty, by an over-worked, and perhaps ill-paid and untrained teacher, who has left school at the age of twelve, who has missed, possibly, one day's lessons in every four or five, and who, on the remaining days, has arrived already tired by long hours of outside employment, cannot be expected to enter the world with a thorough grasp of even the rudiments of knowledge. That ignorance should remain as widespread as it is, after thirty years of State education ostensibly universal and compulsory, is only the natural consequence of such

time are employed for wages outside school-hours, more than 100,000 of these for over ten hours a week. Some are employed as errand-boys, milk-carriers or newspaper boys for as many as fifty or even sixty hours each week, attending school nevertheless. (*Education Department Return—Children Working for Wages*, 1899. See also the *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Employment of School Children*, 1901.)

¹ The average salary of a head-master in an elementary school is £145, of a head-mistress £95, of a certificated class-master £104, of a certificated class-mistress £77.

defects in the system. In no fewer than fifty-seven marriages out of every thousand one or both parties are unable to sign their names in the register.¹ The absence of even the most elementary learning in so large a proportion, and among persons, it must be remembered, who almost all belong to a generation which has recently passed through the schools, leads us to suspect that there must be a vast number who, if they know how to write their names, know little more, and that all the benefits of a sound primary education are still denied to no small section of the people.

The deficiencies in secondary education are well known to be even more serious. Indeed it is not too much to say that there is no system of secondary education in England. Between the primary school and the university, education is in a state of chaos.² No public authorities have power to deal with it as a whole. Private agencies, school boards, town councils and county councils take a share in the work, overlapping in some places, doing little or nothing in others. Higher schools have grown up haphazard here and there. Often their number is quite insufficient. Often their instruction is poor. The number of scholarships is wholly inadequate, and their distribution among the various districts is simply as chance has decided. There is no systematic and thorough training of secondary teachers. In spite of some activity in this department during recent years, we are still very far from the ideal when in every district there shall be a cheap and thoroughly efficient school for secondary teaching; when every child of exceptional parts, no matter into what class it may have been born, shall have the opportunity of passing by the help of scholarships from the elementary to the higher grade, from there to the secondary school, and onward to the

¹ These figures relate to England and Wales alone. (*Registrar-General's Return*, 1900, p. xii.)

² See on these points the *Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education*, Part II.; Lyulph Stanley, *Our National Education*; Graham Balfour, *The Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland*; Acland and Llewellyn Smith, *Studies in Secondary Education*.

university; and when none shall be barred by poverty alone from the best education that the country and the age can give.

The changes needed for the improvement of primary education are obvious enough. To enforce the law requiring universal attendance;¹ to raise gradually the age at which children should be allowed to cease education and begin employment;² to protect them against being set to tiring employments during the years of full attendance at school; to increase the number of teachers and the proportion of certificated teachers; to improve their salaries and to secure them against capricious dismissal—these are the chief and the most urgent requirements.

For higher education a system of schools has to be

¹ Sir John Gorst, Vice-President of the Education Board, said in the House of Commons, June 17, 1898, "If the Government, representing the general wishes of the people, chose to make attendance really compulsory, it could be done. I was making inquiries in the autumn in the Upper Engadine, where distances are greater, the climate is more inclement, and the difficulties of getting to school in winter are greater than in the worst parts of this country. When I asked whether the children absented themselves there, they laughed. Such a thing is unknown, because if a child does not turn up in the morning the parent gets notice that he is fined to the amount of some francs, and if the child fails to appear on the next day the fine is doubled, and on the third day is quadrupled. The effect of this law—which is carried into effect—is that the children all come to school." (Exceptions would no doubt be made in the case of illness or other valid excuse.)

From the *Report of the Irish Manual Training Commission*: "The French Compulsory Education Act starts with the assumption that a pupil is bound to attend every day; if he exceeds four absences (that is, two whole days) in the month, his name is forwarded by the teachers to the Attendance Committee, who can demand explanation and inflict punishment on the parents if they do not get satisfaction. In Paris and other large towns it appears to be admirably carried out. Whenever a pupil misses one single attendance a formal letter demanding an explanation is sent to the parent."

(Both these quotations are taken from the number of *The Schoolmaster* already cited, pp. 958 and 962.)

² On the question of Child Labour, see later, pp. 73-77.

built up almost from the foundations. And at present not even the architects and builders have been appointed. To create a network of local authorities, covering the whole country, and entrusted with the control of higher education, is the first need. We shall not enter here into the controversy which has been hotly raging over the right constitution of these bodies, whether they should be school boards specially elected, or committees of county councils and county borough councils, or composite bodies made up of members of those councils, of members of the existing school boards and of nominees of other authorities.¹ But although there may be disagree-

¹ The arguments in favour of an *ad hoc* authority for higher education, that is an authority elected, like the school board, for educational purposes alone, are—

1. That the whole system of education, primary and secondary, in any district should be controlled by one body, in order that all parts of the system should be worked in relation to one another. To perform properly so large and important a function needs the whole energies of a special board.

2. That the work of municipal councils is already heavy, and that to throw on them this additional charge would destroy the efficiency of local government.

3. That the school boards in the towns have done excellent work, in higher education as well as in primary, and their functions should rather be enlarged than lessened.

4. That the election of bodies for the special purpose of education is itself a reminder to the voters of the importance of education, leads them to attend meetings on the subject, and gives them an interest in it.

5. That composite bodies are never so efficient as those that are directly elected and constantly under the public eye.

The arguments in favour of entrusting the work to county and county borough councils, or to committees mainly appointed by them, are—

1. That these Councils already carry on technical education successfully, and support many secondary schools. They are unwilling to have this work taken away from them.

2. That there are too many elections already, and that it would be a good thing if school boards were to disappear and their duties to be taken over by other authorities.

3. That the right ideal to aim at in local government is one authority for all purposes in each area, for then the best men in the district would be attracted to serve on so important a body. This authority could not be other than the county, county borough, or town council.

[P.T.O.]

ment as to their form, there is none as to their duties. Their task will be to establish, wherever necessary, new schools for secondary and technical teaching, to help with funds and to raise the standard of present schools that are inefficient, to found an adequate number of scholarships for the children of the poorer classes, and to unite into one harmonious whole the scattered materials of higher education. Ultimately, no doubt, these same authorities will be given the control of primary education as well ; in each district one body, and one only, will supervise, and bring into proper mutual relation all the State-aided schools and colleges of every kind ; and the edifice of national education will at last be completed in all its parts.

Further, the State may co-operate with those educational experts who, in all grades of schools, and in numberless detailed ways, are trying to improve the curriculum, and to arrive at the right combination of the development of faculties, the imparting of knowledge and the training of character, in which the best system of education consists. And lastly, the State can spread knowledge outside the schools by encouraging, and by itself undertaking, the formation of a larger and larger number of museums, galleries, and free libraries.

These are reforms which almost all demand expenditure. That such expenditure is desirable is fully realized

4. That the school boards in small rural parishes are admitted to be inefficient and are doomed to abolition. Small towns also are areas not large enough for an independent authority for higher education, if the schools are to be properly distributed. Since the new body is to be elected in a larger area, the county council in these cases should naturally be chosen.

5. In one-third of England there are no school boards, but there are county and county borough councils everywhere.

6. In school board elections educational interests are constantly sacrificed to sectarian interests ; to give school boards the control of higher education would be to introduce sectarian strife in that department also.

7. If the plan of a composite committee were adopted, and if some of the members were nominated by the Education Department or sat by virtue of holding certain offices, there would be a guarantee that experts in education would have seats, and be able to join in the work.

by the countries that compete with us in trade and rival us in progress. In England also the truth of the saying that a nation can invest money in no more profitable way than in the brains of its children is becoming recognized, and Liberals, with these improvements in view, make no scruple in pressing on the electorate the claims of education to a fuller measure of financial support.

CHAPTER II

HOUSING

FROM time to time the housing question is in all men's mouths. It fills the press; it is discussed at meetings; it is debated in Parliament; it even receives mention from the Throne. But little that is effective is done, public attention soon turns to other topics, and the problem is left to grow year by year yet more vast and yet more pressing.

The facts of the case are familiar. In many of the great towns there is an extreme dearth of house accommodation. Six millions of people, in England and Wales, pass their lives in homes of not more than three rooms, half of them in homes of two rooms or one; three millions live under conditions injurious to health—are "overcrowded," according to the definition of overcrowding given in the census; seventy thousand in London alone are packed together at the rate of *five persons or more to each room*.¹ Large numbers of such houses as exist are well known to be dilapidated and insanitary. The demand for houses outrunning the supply, leads to a fierce competition for any tenement that falls vacant; this in turn causes an inflation of rents, and it is no uncommon thing to find that the poorest classes are obliged to pay a rent for their rooms three, four, and up to eight times as much as would cover the cost of the actual building of similar tenements.²

¹ These figures are taken from the *Census of England and Wales*, 1891, vol. iv. pp. 20-22; vol. ii. p. 20.

² Compare the present rents of rooms in the crowded parts of London, seldom less than three shillings a week for each, with the

Nor are these evils limited to the towns. In no small proportion of the villages there is the same dearth of good houses. The farm labourer's cottage in Dorset may be as overcrowded as the dock labourer's tenement in Limehouse, and the most picturesque villages of the Midlands may show dwellings as dilapidated as any in the slums of Hull or Newcastle. Very many working-men, unable to find cottages near their work, are obliged to travel several miles daily from and to their homes. Moreover, the tenure of the cottages is frequently insecure. Many of them are held by the farmers, and let only to their own work-people. If a labourer loses his work, he forfeits his home as well ; and when, as often happens, there is no other cottage vacant, this loss of home is nothing less than a sentence of exile from the village.¹ The insecurity of tenure is unquestionably

cost of the municipal cottages recently built at Richmond. (For the latter see *The Housing of the Working Classes*, by Alderman W. Thompson, p. 33.)

In the *Report of the Royal Commission on Housing*, 1885, it is stated (p. 17) that almost all the poor in the crowded districts of London pay for their tenements not less than a fifth of their incomes, and about one-half of them pay as much as a quarter of their incomes in rent. Since that date the rise of rents has probably been at least as rapid as the rise of the wages of those classes.

¹ Abundant evidence to show that these are no rare or exaggerated evils is given by the recent Royal Commission on Labour in its reports on the farm labourer.

"There are very few districts in any one of the unions visited," says one of the Assistant Commissioners, "where the cottages are satisfactory from the point of view of condition and construction. Their worst feature, common to all parts of the country, is the want of separate bedroom accommodation—a circumstance which has a most injurious effect, not only on the health, but on the morals of the occupants. Structural and sanitary defects are also most general."

"The present supply of cottages," says another, "is inadequate, a great number of the older buildings having been allowed to go down in recent years. Generally speaking, the cottages are of a poor description ; the older ones are roughly made of 'clom' (mud and rushes mixed), or have rubble walls of inferior quality. As a rule, they consist of two rooms only, each being from 10 to 12 feet square ; there is generally no loft, the roof being open to sight,

one of the chief causes of the slow progress of the farm-labouring class; the workman becomes unduly subservient to an employer who can not only dismiss him from his employment, but expel him from the village; the independence of his character is undermined; he is

but there is a partition about 5 feet high to divide the rooms. The floors are of earth, and on a wet day they are all marked with footprints. As to complaints to which labourers are liable, consumption is traceable to these damp cottages; so high has been the percentage of pneumonia that the Registrar-General a few years ago instituted an inquiry into the causes of its prevalence in the district. Infantile mortality is also high, probably owing to the inhalation of damp from the subsoil. There is but little ventilation, except where the roofs are bad; the windows (if there are more than one) have no means of opening. . . . Farm-servants sleep over cattle-sheds and stables; the system is bad, and it is a disgrace to put boys there, and it is a pity to see them there when suffering from any illness. . . . The welks are almost all open; they are only cesspools."

"The agents," we read again, "say they are reluctant to pull cottages down even when this ought to be done, lest the occupants should have no place to go to. The labourers also say that when a son gets married he must either go into the town, or become a lodger until a vacant cottage can be found. . . . Often, too, a tenant will tolerate any amount of discomfort and dilapidation rather than leave a house which may have been his home for many years, or run the risk of having to leave the neighbourhood—a not uncommon risk."

"There is also a feeling of resentment against cottages being let with farms. 'It is handing oneself over body and soul to one's employer.' If anything goes wrong, or there is any disagreement, it is felt that the inconvenience is all borne by the labourer."

Again: "There are many houses left more fitted for animals to inhabit than men and women, and in which no human being could either be comfortable or contented."

And the official summary of the results of the whole inquiry, carefully conducted, as it was, in typical districts throughout the country, declares that "There is abundant evidence to show that a large proportion of the cottages inhabited by the labourers are below a proper standard of what is required for decency and comfort, while a considerable number of them are vile and deplorably wretched dwellings. . . . The reports of the Assistant Commissioners contain descriptions, based upon their own observation, and strengthened by reports of officials of the local sanitary authorities, of the prevailing defects of cottages as regards their original construction, their state of repair, the sanitary condition and drainage, the provision or want of sanitary conveniences, the

timid of joining a trade union, and any one who is closely acquainted with the conditions of rural labour in the midland and southern counties of England knows that the precarious tenure on which the labourer holds his home is largely responsible for the depressed state of his class. Mining and manufacturing villages, as well as purely agricultural villages, often show a very unsatisfactory condition of housing.

The effects of overcrowding and insanitation cannot fail to be grave. The most thickly-inhabited districts have almost always an excessive death-rate. Consumption is rife in exact proportion to the degree of overcrowding. Immorality is encouraged by the indiscriminate mixing of the sexes. Intemperance finds a rank soil in these homes without freshness or comfort or quiet. The confined air-space breeds lassitude, renders the men and women less active and regular at their work, the children less quick at their lessons.¹ So the lot of the poor is made hard, and the nation as a whole suffers by the death and deterioration of the workers who are its chief wealth, and by the cost of combating the disease, pauperism and crime which are bred in the festering slums.

Can these evils be cured? The sufferers themselves are helpless. They cannot move from their confined, unhealthy and over-rented homes if the conditions are elsewhere the same. To build houses for themselves they

insufficient water-supply. It is difficult to condense or abridge these statements without exaggerating or diminishing the effect of the evidence. But it is impossible to read these reports without experiencing a painful feeling that too frequently and too commonly the agricultural labourer lives under conditions which are, both physically and morally, unwholesome and offensive."

(A large number of similar extracts from official and unofficial evidence relating to the various aspects of the rural housing question, together with a number of further references, have been published in a pamphlet entitled *The Cottage Question: Evidence showing the need of Reform*, published by the Land Law Reform Association, 18, Cockspur Street, London, S.W.)

¹ An immense mass of testimony on all these points may be found in the now voluminous literature on the subject. (For a recent bibliography see the appendix to *The House Famine and*

are unable ; even with the help of building societies most of them have not the means ; those who have the means can seldom obtain suitable land. Nor can the

How to Relieve it, a pamphlet published by the Fabian Society.) The following special points may be of interest—

INFLUENCE OF OVERCROWDING ON THE DEATH-RATE (LONDON).

Sparsely inhabited Districts.	Average yearly death-rate per 1000 living, 1888-1897.	Densely inhabited Districts.	Average yearly death-rate per 1000 living, 1888-1897.
Paddington . . .	17'7	Holborn	27'4
St. George's, Hanover Square . .	17'1	Limehouse . . .	27'7
Lee	15'7	St. George's, Southwark	27'7
Plumstead . . .	15'6	St. Luke	29'1
Lewisham . . .	14'7	St. George's-in-the-East	29'2
Hampstead . . .	14'0	Strand	29'6

(*Report for 1898 of the Medical Officer of the London County Council*, p. 4.)

Comparing town with country, the death-rate in London and the chief industrial districts is no less than *50 per cent. higher* than the rate in the healthiest agricultural counties ; among infants it is 80 per cent. higher. (*Return of the Registrar-General of Births, Marriages and Deaths*, 1901, pp. xv, xvi. The figures relate to the year 1899.)

RELATION OF OVERCROWDING TO PHTHISIS (LONDON).

Proportion of total population living more than two persons in each room.	Death-rate from phthisis per 1000 persons living, 1898.
Districts with under 10 per cent. of overcrowding	1'10
" from 10 to 15 "	1'43
" 15 to 20 "	1'61
" 20 to 25 "	1'80
" 25 to 30 "	2'07
" 30 to 35 "	2'42
" over 35 "	2'63

(*Report for 1898 of the Medical Officer of the London County Council*, p. 46.)

cure be left solely to the enterprise of private builders. Useful as the work has been, and active as are the present efforts, of artizans' dwellings companies, speculative builders, country landowners and other individuals, the fact that the evils exist, that they have long continued, and that they seem to grow more and more acute as time goes by, is of itself enough to prove that private enterprise is a force insufficient for the need. Nor, again, can we rely, as some seem inclined to rely, on manufacturers being tempted by lower rents and wages to move their factories into the country districts, drawing with them a part of the population and relieving the

OVERCROWDING AND INTEMPERANCE.

"Of the six counties most remarkable for drunkenness in recent years, no less than four (viz. Northumberland, Durham, Pembroke-shire and Cumberland) are also to be found in the six counties most remarkable for overcrowding, while the remaining two (viz. Lancashire and Glamorganshire) are also counties which contain a considerable proportion of densely-crowded districts." (Rowntree and Sherwell, *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, p. 599.)

OVERCROWDING AS A CAUSE OF INDUSTRIAL INEFFICIENCY.

Extract from the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes*, 1885, p. 14—

"Even statistics of actual disease consequent on overcrowding would not convey the whole truth as to the loss to health caused by it to the labouring classes. Some years ago the Board of Health instituted inquiries in the low neighbourhoods to see what was the amount of labour lost in the year, not by illness, but by sheer exhaustion and inability to do work. It was found that upon the average every workman or workwoman lost about twenty days in the year from simple exhaustion, and the wages thus lost would go towards paying an increased rent for a better house. There can be little doubt that the same thing is going on now, perhaps to an even greater extent. That overcrowding lowers the general standard, that the people get depressed and weary, is the testimony of those who are daily witnesses of the lives of the poor."

On the subject in general, see the *Eighth Special Report of the United States Commissioner for Labour (On the Housing of the Working People)*, 1895. On p. 78 of that report there is a specially interesting table showing that in the large towns of Scotland the death-rate is high or low in almost exact proportion to the number of persons per room in each town.

congestion in the towns. The process at best would be excessively slow. And at present the forces that draw industries into the towns seem far stronger than the centrifugal forces that would send them away. We are driven to the conclusion that here also the State must intervene. The housing question has come within the field of politics, and the needed reforms must find a place among the aims of Liberal policy.

The chief proposals made by those who have given the closest attention to this problem fall into three groups. They would make more land available for building. They would encourage local authorities to build. They would suppress insanitary nuisances, especially overcrowding, with greater stringency.

There is a story of a prisoner who, having tried without success every possible means of escape from the gaol, having failed to file the bars of his cell, to break through the roof, to dig under the walls, at last thought of trying the handle of the door ; he found it unlocked, and walked out. There is a simple method of enabling the confined townsman to escape from the evil conditions that surround him ; it is to open the gates of the town. Every improvement in the means of communication between the centres of the great cities and the outlying districts opens up a larger area of land for building and helps to relieve the congestion. Every tramway that is laid, and every additional workman's train that is started, is a breach in the walls that restrict the flow of population. There are classes of workmen, no doubt, who must live near their work and cannot go to the suburbs. But there are others who are not so tied ; these could remove to roomier quarters, further from the centre, and their removal would leave more space for those who remained. Activity in improving communications, on the part of Parliament and local authorities, is generally held to be one of the most important factors in the solution of the housing problem.

A reform in the law of rating would be another means

of bringing more land into the building market. Land is rated, not on its real value, but on the income which it happens to be yielding. A field in the suburb of a city may be worth £200 a year if built upon, and £20 a year if used for grazing. If the owner builds, it is rated at £200. If he holds back the land, in the hope of a still larger income later, it will be rated at only £20. Not only is the revenue of the town diminished, and land speculation directly encouraged, but landlords are practically invited to withhold their estates from building. Suppose it were the practice, when the owner of a collection of valuable pictures died, to levy the Death Duties on the pictures only if the owner had thrown open his gallery to the public, but to allow them to be exempt if he had hidden them in some disused room, such a custom would be universally denounced as contrary to financial justice and public policy. To exempt vacant building land from rating on its true value is no more defensible. The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working-Classes—a very weighty and representative body—recognized the importance of this question in relation to the problem of housing, and recommended a change in the law. Equitable in itself, desirable as a means of furnishing fresh revenue to the relief of the ratepayers at large, the reform would also have the effect of making landowners in the suburbs eager to see their fields covered with the houses that are so urgently needed by the people.¹

But even if these measures had been carried long ago, there is no reason to believe that the problem which faces us would have been altogether avoided. To make land available for building does not ensure that it will be used for building. Communications may be improved, and the working-classes be willing to move to the outlying districts; vacant building land may be rated more heavily, and the owners be more ready to put it in the market; it does not follow that speculators will be forth-

¹ It would not be difficult to make special provisions for the preservation of open spaces. See the *Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation*, 1901, p. 174.

coming to erect a sufficient number of cheaply rented houses. Where the congestion continues the State must itself take up the work. Parliament has already bestowed on the local councils considerable building powers. In certain towns these powers have been actively used. In the rural districts of Ireland, again, fifteen thousand cottages have been erected by public bodies within the last seventeen years.¹ If the problem has not been solved, it is partly due to the apathy of the Town and District Councils, and to the indifference of the electorate that appoints them. But partly, also, it is due to serious defects in the law, that hamper action even where there is the will to act; and experience has shown the necessity of a number of further amendments.

Let the reader suppose himself a member of the Housing Committee of some Town Council. He knows that there is much overcrowding among the poorer classes of the town, and that many of the dwellings are thoroughly unfit for habitation. He sees that the overcrowded families cannot be evicted, that the unfit dwellings cannot be closed, because there are no vacant houses to which the tenants can go. He determines to spend all his energies in persuading his Committee to adopt a large scheme of municipal building. But he soon discovers that the law is so weighted with restrictions that it is exceedingly difficult to set it in motion.

No more land may be bought than is required for the needs of the moment. The population of the town may be increasing; the price of land may be rising year by year; it may be certain that other houses will be required in the near future; nevertheless, the Council is forbidden to buy in advance of future needs: it cannot use its foresight to prepare the way for cheap building later on, and it cannot begin to lay out a large estate, with roads and open spaces, on a definite and far-reaching plan.

Or, perhaps, he has in view some "insanitary area" in the centre of the town. It is covered with old, dilapidated and unhealthy houses. He thinks that the

¹ *Report of the Local Government Board of Ireland, 1900.*

Committee could not do better than to take this area and rebuild it. But he finds that in this case exorbitant compensation will have to be paid to the owners of the property, so large a sum that the expense would probably be too great to make it possible to proceed. When food unfit for consumption is discovered, he knows that the food is destroyed, and the purveyors are punished. It will seem to him strange that when houses unfit for habitation are discovered, the houses should have to be rebuilt from public funds and the owners rewarded.

Examining the matter further, another obstacle is disclosed. Money must, of course, be borrowed for the purchase of the land and for building, and the debt must be repaid in yearly instalments. He finds with despair that only fifty years are allowed for repaying the cost of the land, although land is a permanent asset, and, as a rule, only forty years or less for repaying the cost of the houses,¹ although they will probably last, and bring revenue, for at least a century. The annual instalments must therefore be very large. The rents in consequence must be high, perhaps so high as to put the houses beyond the reach of the class whom he has chiefly in view. He begins to question whether, after all, it is worth while to continue advocating his scheme. No doubt it is important that Parliament should prevent the local authorities of this generation from saddling the ratepayers of the next with constantly growing accumulations of debt; some period of repayment must be fixed. But he is surely right in thinking it unjust that the tenants, during the first forty or fifty years, of the houses to be built under his scheme should be required to pay off the entire capital cost of the land and building; should be required, in fact, to make a free gift of a valuable property, yielding a large income, to the ratepayers of the next generation.

The reader, thoroughly out of temper with town government, moves, we will suppose, to the country. He finds himself a member of a Rural District Council.

¹ See the instances given in Thompson, *Housing of the Working Classes*, p. 8.

He discovers the same lack of house-room prevailing, and he determines to see whether the rural Housing Law is better than the urban. He finds it worse. There are the same stringent provisions with regard to the repayment of loans.¹ The powers for obtaining land are wholly inadequate. He discovers that Parliament has indeed given the Councils compulsory powers for buying land when it cannot be obtained by agreement, but the process to be followed is most cumbersome and costly, entailing long delay, an appeal to a large number of authorities, and heavy expenses in fees. He learns that if the land had been needed for allotments, a simple and speedy method could have been taken; but although the building of houses is a matter of at least as serious public importance as the letting of allotments, when the land is needed for housing, this method is forbidden. Finally, he discovers that before a single cottage can be built, whether the land be obtained compulsorily or not, the District Council, the County Council, and the Local Government Board must each make its own inquiry on the spot and give its separate consent—a true case of using a Nasmyth hammer to crack an egg. He sees that a building scheme would be very unlikely ever to thread its way through the maze of legal difficulties before it; and he knows that if it did, the preliminary expenses would have been so heavy that the rents would have to be fixed at a sum too large for the labourer to pay, or else that the rates would have to be charged with an annual loss. And he would not be surprised to learn that, since building powers were given to Rural Councils by the Housing Act of 1890, only fourteen cottages have been built by them through the whole length and breadth of England and Wales,² or just one cottage to every thousand parishes.

So our Councillor would soon realize that, both in town and country, the Housing Acts are far from perfect. They give large powers, but trammel them with petty restrictions. They are like a piece of machinery

¹ Crotch, *The Cottage Homes of England*, 150-1.

² *Ibid.* pp. 86-132.

that is well planned, but so badly finished that excessive friction spoils its working.

Liberals urge that, in the towns, the local authority should be allowed to buy land when it is cheap and hold it for future needs, that excessive compensation for the land and buildings in "insanitary areas" should be discontinued; in the country, that land should be obtainable compulsorily by the simple process allowed in the case of allotments, and that a resolution of the District Council, confirmed, if money has to be borrowed, by the Local Government Board, should be a sufficient warrant for action; in both town and country that the re-payment of loans should be extended over a longer period.¹ Already in many towns, houses for the working-classes have been built by the Town Councils, and, in spite of the onerous conditions, are found to pay their way. Nor are the barriers insuperable to similar action with equally satisfactory results in the rural districts.² With the amendments proposed, municipal building would be possible on an extensive scale, and an enlightened public opinion will be the better able to stir local councils to take up the trowel and hammer, and themselves build the houses which private enterprise is unable or unwilling to supply. And if it should

¹ It is estimated that if the period of repayment of loans for building were extended even so little as from thirty years to fifty, this would often in the towns be enough to allow a reduction of rent of no less than sixpence a week on each room. If the period were extended to seventy or eighty years there would, of course, be a far greater reduction. (See The Howard Medal Prize Essay, by Dr. Sykes, on "The Results of State, Municipal and Organized Private Action on the Housing of the Working Classes in London and other large Cities," published in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, June 1901, p. 205.)

² A cottage and land costing £160 and let at 2s. 6d. a week would give a return of 3 per cent. and allow 1 per cent for a sinking fund and other charges. Although even 2s. 6d. is often beyond the means of the farm labourer, if these cottages are taken by the village artisans *their* cottages will be available in turn for the tenants of the most dilapidated houses. Every group of new cottages built in a village helps to raise the housing standard of the village as a whole.

happen that the force of public opinion and the native energy of local bodies still fall short of the need, then it will be possible, as it would certainly be necessary, for Parliament, through the Local Government Board, to bring such pressure to bear on those bodies as will induce, or even compel, them to take action for the cure of this crying evil.

The more vigorous enforcement of the law against overcrowding and against structural and sanitary defects is the third part of the progressive policy. It needs neither explanation nor defence. In this case the existing statutes appear to be adequate, except in some small matters of detail.¹ Progress need not wait for the action of Parliament. It depends upon the efficiency of the Sanitary Authorities and of the Local Government Board.² But it must be remembered that dilapidated houses cannot, without serious hardship, be closed, or overcrowded families evicted, unless other accommodation exists to which the tenants may remove, and that the degree to which these evils can be cured must needs depend in large measure upon the extent to which fresh building operations are undertaken.

Whether there should be added to our list a measure to give the farm labourer some security of tenure of his home is a point which has not yet been fully discussed, and a proposal which to many persons seems open to

¹ See on this point the recently published work by Dr. Sykes, *Public Health and Housing*.

² It has been often suggested, by the Royal Commissions on Labour and on Welsh Land among other authorities, that the administration of the sanitary laws in rural districts would be much improved if the status of the Medical Officers of Health and the qualifications of the Sanitary Inspectors, on whom lies the chief burden of the actual work, were raised. At present the Medical Officers are usually doctors busily engaged in private practice, and the incompetence of some Sanitary Inspectors is unfortunately notorious. It is urged that Medical Officers should give their whole time to the work, and that the Sanitary Inspectors should be required everywhere, as already in London, to hold a certificate obtained by examination.

indirect objections outweighing its advantages. But even if this question be postponed, there would remain a large, comprehensive, and above all a practical policy from the adoption of which valuable advantage would ensue. If the reforms suggested be carried, if greater activity in the sanitary authorities—the necessary complement of those reforms—be secured, and if as a result the dearth of houses be relieved and sanitary defects be uniformly suppressed, the nation will be rid of a grave scandal and the poor relieved of a cruel hardship. “Domestic life,” it has been said, “creates a people.” Liberalism will have rendered no small service were it to accomplish no other thing than to secure by these means such conditions of domestic life as will foster a moral, a contented, and a healthful people.

The surroundings of the home influence character. The aspect of the city influences it as well. Qualities were fostered in classical Athens or mediæval Florence, by the mere appearance of the place, which find a poor soil in our Bermondsey or Leeds. Crude architecture, mean and treeless streets, the obtrusion of advertisement everywhere, with a canopy of smoke over all—the ordinary environment of daily life in a modern English manufacturing town is not calculated to inspire refinement or encourage cheerfulness. Progress has methods subtle and indirect as well as methods obvious and immediate; the things about us impart their tone; and in any discussion of State action in relation to surroundings the need of beautifying our cities cannot be omitted as unimportant.

The powers of the State in this are limited. But at least it can make its own buildings dignified, attractive, and an example to the rest. It can exercise its control of the streets, the parks and the open spaces so as to lend some little embellishment to the acre upon acre of dull and monotonous houses which now form the

only environment that a third of the nation knows. It can regulate the abuses of advertising. It can above all enforce and extend the existing legislation against the pollution of the air by smoke. Progressive thinkers hold that these are no slight and trivial things. Beauty also has its uses ; art also has its claims.

CHAPTER III

TEMPERANCE

IF social reformers were to leave intemperance unfought they would be like an invading army that left unchallenged behind it the strongest positions of the enemy. Their work would be incomplete, and what little had been accomplished would soon be undone. For half, probably, of the existing crime, at least a fourth of the national pauperism, and an equal proportion of the increasing insanity, are well known to be directly due to excessive drinking ; ¹ a vast part of the mental weakness which is not insanity, of the distress which has not yet passed the line of pauperism, and of the misconduct which falls short of crime, can certainly be attributed to the same cause ; three hundred thousand cases of open drunkenness are tried in the police-courts every year ; ² the cases of undetected drunkenness must undoubtedly be more numerous still ; and in the words, not of sentimental and prejudiced fanatics for reform, but of the chosen representatives of the liquor trade itself on the recent Royal Commission on Licensing, "it is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation." The time is past when the necessity for temperance reform

¹ See the *Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws*, pp. 80, 175, 218 ; and Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell's book *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, an invaluable collection of information on this subject, pp. 464 *et seq.* (first edition).

² *Judicial Statistics : England and Wales*, 1897, i. p. 22 ; *Scotland*, 1897, i. p. 47 ; *Ireland*, 1896, i. p. 31.

needed proof. The question now is only of the form which the remedy must take. The disease, however, is complicated, and no one drug is likely to work the cure.

Were it generally held indeed, as some hold, that all drinking is excessive drinking and that every glass of beer and spirits is poisonous, we should not need to look for elaborate measures ; with the cordial approval of the people, the State would straightway suppress the drink-trade root and branch, and with it all intemperance. But since that is not the general view, since, rightly or wrongly, the mass of the nation look upon alcoholic drinks, taken in moderation, as ordinary articles of diet, and emphatically refuse to allow them to be ranked as poisons, it is idle to ignore the fact that a measure of complete prohibition, even if desirable, could in this country be neither carried nor enforced.¹ Prohibition being impracticable, our medicine must be less drastic and more complex.

Believing that excessive drinking is, to a large extent, no more than a fashion, practical temperance reformers rely, first, on the influence of public opinion to change that fashion. The general advance of society, and the devoted efforts of the numerous temperance workers, are bringing a better sense of decency and a stronger appreciation of the harmfulness of excess ; these in turn may be expected to work a similar change in the habits of the classes still intemperate as was effected in the after-dinner customs of the wealthy a century ago.

Secondly, while public opinion will more and more firmly proscribe intemperance, the general improvement in the conditions of labour will tend to remove some of its causes. No one will dispute that low wages and irregular work, long hours of monotonous labour, and, above all, the absence of education, breed a wretchedness, a craving for relief and a lack of resourcefulness which contribute powerfully to excessive drinking. The

¹ In several of the American States where prohibition has been made the law against the wishes of large sections of the population, there is found to be even more drunkenness than in neighbouring non-prohibition States. (*Rowntree and Sherwell*, 131.)

gradual progress from these conditions, constantly proceeding, affects closely, if indirectly, this problem also.

Thirdly, there is the provision of counter-attractions to the public-house. At present almost the only scene of cheerfulness and place of recreation easily accessible to the poor, it is not strange that the public-house should be so widely patronized. Of the necessary counter-attractions the home would, under proper conditions, naturally be the chief. We have seen that the housing question is intimately bound up with the temperance question. It has been well said that the public-house is not only the poor man's club, but often his only sitting-room as well ; and if the attempt to raise the standard of housing succeeds in providing the people with homes in which they can enjoy a repose and a social intercourse impossible in the cramped and crowded tenements and cottages in which so many of them are now compelled to live, one of the chief springs of intemperance will be finally stopped at its source. Combined with this is the provision, more universally and on a more generous scale, of places of healthy amusement and of opportunities for outdoor sports.

But these three remedial measures—the influence of public opinion, the improvement of social conditions, the provision of counter-attractions—only indirectly touch the evil ; they are to a large extent outside the sphere of political action. The remaining part of the temperance policy applies directly ; it depends for success upon State action, and upon State action alone ; in it, therefore, Liberal politicians find their own special share in the work of temperance reform. To secure a reduction in the number of public-houses and an extension, together with a stricter enforcement, of the laws against drunkenness, has long held, and still holds, a leading place in their programme.

That the number of licensed houses is in most places, whether towns or villages, excessive for any reasonable need, few will deny. The trade representatives on the Royal Commission on Licensing, whose authority in this will not be challenged, not only admit but strongly

emphasize the fact.¹ But each public-house is a fresh advertisement of the pleasures of drinking ; each one at the corner of an alley is a temptation to many of the inhabitants as the candle is to the moth ; each one is an agency for pushing the sale of drink ; the more there are, the keener become the efforts of the competitors to drive their trade and the less scrupulous are found to be the methods that they use ; drunkenness is recognized to be, in no small measure, the product of its opportunities ; other things being equal, the more numerous are the public-houses the more widespread is the intemperance ; and to limit their number must necessarily be among the main objects of thoughtful reformers. It is by restricting licensing more closely that the State can best assist in the attack on intemperance.

We need not be turned from this path by the denunciations constantly levelled at such proposals by those who term them infringements of liberty, and "futile attempts to make men sober by Act of Parliament." To prohibit entirely the use of certain customary drinks might indeed be an invasion of liberty. Perhaps the benefit could be shown greater than the loss. In any case this is not the proposal now made. How to prevent men, by whatever more moderate methods may be possible, from becoming drunkards is the question at issue, and to effect this would be to preserve, not to destroy their liberty. For a real freedom must always include the opportunity to reach a high level of character and capacity ; since the drunkard, through his very intemperance, loses that opportunity, he may be truly said to have now no real freedom ; and just as the edict of Diocletian forbidding a free man to sell himself into slavery must be counted a safeguard of liberty and not

¹ *Majority Report*, pp. 6, 43, 49. In London there is one public-house for every 90 families ; in Birmingham and Bristol the proportion is one to 40 ; in Manchester and Sheffield, one to 35. Ireland shows an even greater congestion. Cork licenses one house in every 19 ; Waterford one in 15 ; and in some of the villages we have the extraordinary fact that one-third of all the inhabited houses are public-houses. (*Minority Report of the Royal Commission*, pp. 91 and 227. *Rowntree and Sherwell*, pp. 80-81.)

an invasion of it, so laws preventing enslavement to drink are the friends and not the enemies of freedom. As for the supposed impossibility of making men sober by Act of Parliament, it is a sufficient answer to point out that at the present moment, by that very means, large numbers of men are as a matter of fact made sober. Abolish the taxes on drink, the system of licensing and the police control over public-houses, which the wisdom of the legislature has established; allow intoxicants to be bought freely, and as cheaply as they can be manufactured; allow them to be used without risk of punishment for excess; and there is no room to doubt that intemperance would be vastly and immediately increased. Experience gives proof. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Parliament released its hold on the drink-trade, and the previous regulations were repealed. An orgy of drunkenness followed. The famous signs "Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two-pence, clean straw for nothing," appeared on numberless drink-shops; a vast part of the population sank straightway to the lowest depth of degradation, and it was only the influence of wiser laws and an opposite policy that slowly effected a partial rescue.¹ In almost every civilized country the liquor traffic is under strict legislative control, with valuable results to sobriety. It is a strange perversity that with these facts in our own country and abroad, in our time and in previous generations, before them, so many politicians should try to discredit the whole policy of temperance legislation by pretending that it is in no way possible to change customs by the power of law or to make men sober by Act of Parliament.

That these objections need not deter us is plain enough. The choice of methods by which the number of public-houses may be lowered is less obvious. For many years the Liberal party supported the plan of Local Option, of giving, that is, to the inhabitants of each district the power to fix the number of licences, if any, to be issued—a plan which had the advantages of elasticity

¹ See Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, i. 479.

and of enlarging the sphere of self-government. But there has been a tendency, particularly since the publication of the reports of the Royal Commission, to a change of view. It has been more clearly recognized that Local Option might prove an ineffective weapon, and be enforced least often in the localities where reform was needed most ; for where public-houses have the greatest number of patrons there also they are likely to find at a poll the greatest number of defenders. And further, it is feared that Local Option might lead to violent and disturbing action and reaction. The alternative plan recommended in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission has been gaining adherents, and it seems probable that when legislation is introduced it will take the form of a general reduction of the number of licences to a fixed proportion to the number of the population of each area.¹ The proportion would be different for town and for country. The local authority ² would have the power to limit the licences, if it thought advisable, below the maximum fixed in the statute. To it would be left the somewhat invidious task of selecting the houses to be closed. The scheme appears to be both practicable and effective, and at present seems likely to hold the field.

But in the vexed question of compensation for the publicans and brewers whose licences are discontinued, no final conclusion has yet been reached. There are powerful arguments on the one side and on the other which are still being weighed in the public judgment.

Licences, say the more rigid section of the temperance party, are granted for one year, and for one year only ; every renewal must be formally applied for ; the law-courts have clearly decided that the magistrates may refuse such renewal whenever it seems to them expedient,³ and as a matter of fact, licences are now

¹ This method has been adopted in the colony of Victoria and in Austria.

² It is proposed that representatives of the Town or County Council, as the case may be, should be added to the Justices of the Peace, who now form the Licensing Authority.

³ Except in the case of "on-licences granted before the year 1869," which can be only discontinued on certain specific grounds. But

occasionally discontinued by the magistrates, without compensation, for no other reason than that the number of public-houses exceeds the needs of the locality. The principle is the same whether the licences are stopped by hundreds or by units, and compensation is no more necessary in the one case than in the other. Nor would such a course be unjust, for the risk of non-renewal is well known; and if men invest capital in a business recognized to be precarious, without being provident enough to insure against loss, the State is no more obliged to relieve them when the loss occurs than to relieve any other class of unsuccessful speculators. The annual tenure of the licence is one of the normal conditions of the trade; it is a set-off to the advantage given by the State when it prevents free competition in the sale of drink, and so enables a limited number of brewers and publicans to earn high monopoly profits; it is not reasonable that the trade should expect both to reap this advantage, and at the same time to elude the drawback which is attached to it. The licences are, indeed, gifts of high value received from the hands of the community; by their help great fortunes have been accumulated; and the trade should rather be grateful for having received them so long than raise an outcry if, for reasons of policy, the gifts are continued no longer. If precedents be asked for, they may be had in abundance. For centuries the State has interfered with the drink traffic; in recent years it has limited the hours of sale, enforced a partial or complete Sunday closing, refused to continue the licences of houses that were below a certain rateable value, and has brought about a contraction of the sale in numerous minor ways; on no occasion has any compensation been paid for the losses so caused. Finally, it is said, the very fact that the houses would be closed for reasons of public policy is a proof that, in the opinion of Parliament and of the nation, their existence is, and has been, a

it is said that there never has been, and is not now, any good reason for exempting these licences from the ordinary operations of the law.

cause of intemperance and an injury to the people. It is a strange doctrine that those who are convicted of harming their neighbours should be remunerated when their malpractices at last are stopped. To demand rather that they should be made to refund a part of their illicit gains of the past would not be unjust. Merely to close the houses summarily would be merciful. To allow, as is usually proposed, a term of years in which those interested could arrange to retire from the business, would be a measure of large and unmerited generosity.

The advocates of compensation reply that the licences, although annual in form, are permanent in fact; that non-renewal, except in cases of misconduct, is exceedingly rare; and that even where public-houses are notoriously too numerous, the magistrates, with very few exceptions, continue the licences. Whatever may be the letter of the law, its spirit does not contemplate, and its practice does not foreshadow, a wholesale stoppage of licensing. The expectation of renewal, based on long custom, is so strong that licences are continually bought and sold, immense sums of money, in this and in other ways, have been invested in the liquor trade, and a very large number of men rely on it for their livelihood. To deprive all these of capital or earnings without compensation can never be other, they say, than gross confiscation. So far from the licence being a gift from the State, and the public-house a creation of the law at the disposal of the law, the publican, they claim, is a trader in the same category as the grocer and the baker; he supplies commodities in general demand; the licensing system is no more than a means of control adopted to prevent abuses in a trade already existing; and if a part of this trade be destroyed, not by an ordinary falling off in demand, but by the deliberate act of the State, the State is in justice bound, whatever precedents may say, to compensate those to suffer. The time notice suggested in Lord Peel's Minority Report, is no compensation at all, and those who own machinery and houses which will be rendered useless, or occupy posts

which will be abolished, cannot be expected to regard it as an equivalent for their loss. Particularly, it is often added, should the plea for compensation be admitted since it can easily be met without imposing fresh taxation for the purpose ; for if a proportion of the houses in any locality be closed, the others will gain some, though doubtless not an equal, increase of trade through the lessened competition, and this "unearned increment," whatever its amount, may properly be made the source from which the State could draw the funds for compensation. And lastly, if there be no legal right to compensation, there is not only a moral right but a reason of expediency why it should be given, for you will never be able to carry a law closing public-houses unless this concession be made.¹

The controversy is not yet closed. To refer to the principles of Liberalism will not help us to a decision. Those principles demand a restriction of licensing, since they favour temperance, and this is a means to temperance. They are hostile to any kind of confiscation, since they favour the just rights of property. But whether licences are property, and whether discontinuance would be confiscation, are separate and unique questions to be discussed on their own merits without reference to political theory. The discussion is still proceeding within the ranks of the Liberal party, and the day has not yet come when a policy can be definitely stated as the policy of the party as a whole.

But on the necessity of a number of minor alterations in the law, framed to secure a stricter suppression of actual drunkenness, and a limitation of temptations in ways supplementary to a partial closing of houses, there is no disagreement. These amendments would strengthen the police control over the licensed houses, would make the licensing authority more representative, and would erect fresh safeguards against the corrupt control which is said to be sometimes, though probably rarely, exercised

¹ On the subject in general, see a book recently published by the London School of Economics and Political Science, *The Place of Compensation in Temperance Reform*, by C. P. Sanger.

by the liquor trade over the licensing and police authorities. They would encourage a greater activity in punishing persons found drunk in the streets, and publicans who permit drunkenness;¹ they would prevent the serving of children on the one hand, and of known habitual inebriates on the other; they would discourage Sunday drinking;² and they would secure that all clubs in which intoxicating liquors are sold should be *bonâ fide* clubs properly conducted, and not drink-shops thinly disguised in order to evade the control of the law.³

But whatever be the details of the proposed legislation, it is at least clear that some legislation, comprehensive and effective, is immediately needed to co-operate with the private agencies that are attacking this degrading and impoverishing vice. The delay has been long. Statesmen and philanthropists, commissions and societies without number, have for generations been striving to obtain liquor laws of an adequate kind. For many years their efforts have been practically resultless. Meantime, intemperance, with all its train of evils, con-

¹ An American method of fitting the punishment to the crime, by making the publican, who last served a man, liable for damages in any injury done by the latter in his drunkenness, deserves attention.

² Sunday closing is the law in Scotland, and, except in five towns, in Ireland also.

³ We have no space to examine the contention that the regulation will never be sufficient until the whole trade is taken out of private hands and put under the direct control of persons who have no interest in pushing the sale—either the municipalities, or, as in Norway and Sweden, philanthropic companies. Such a reform, it is pointed out, would incidentally remove the dangerous political influence of the public-house; would stop the sale of the inferior and most deleterious qualities of liquor, and would make possible the discouragement of intemperance in a score of detailed ways; the faults that have marked the system in Scandinavia could, it is said, be avoided by better methods, and the risk that the rate-payers might unduly promote the sale of drink for the sake of its profits, would not arise if the profits were diverted to the national treasury. In the opinion of many Liberals, a strong case seems to have been shown for at least permitting and encouraging experiments on these lines.

tinues. Shall a cynical and sinister opposition on the part of the traders affected, or, on the other hand, an insistence on extreme measures or a pedantic adherence to old proposals merely because they have been once advanced, be allowed to cause a further postponement? If the force of social reform be more than a name, if the national desire for progress be extant still, no resistance, however powerful, will be allowed to baffle action, and no idealism, however lofty, to delay it. Whatever measures in other departments of politics be postponed, temperance reform at least will be given the precedence it deserves, the well-considered shape it needs to command support, and the whole-hearted support it needs to command success.

CHAPTER IV

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

THERE are few things that affect men more closely than the conditions under which they work. Apart even from questions of wages, a generation of workmen who begin their toil in early childhood, who are compelled to labour for long hours in the day, in surroundings that are insanitary, exposed to sickness through unhealthy processes, can hardly fail to be of a low type. But let their early years be free from labour, secure them ample leisure, make their work-places wholesome, protect them against dangers to health, protect them also against risk of accident, and you will have done much to lead them upwards. This has been the aim of the Factory Acts, of the Mines Regulation Acts, and of other measures of the same class. For a hundred years Parliament has been constantly legislating to improve the conditions of employment. In no department of reform has the State been more active. In none have its efforts borne better results. It may indeed be doubted whether in all the records of legislation, in our own country or in any other, in our own age or in any previous age, there can be found a code of laws as wisely framed, as effective in action, as fruitful of material good to as large a number of people, as the English code of laws relating to the conditions of employment. Few would challenge its right to a place among the finest achievements of political action. But although it has these virtues, it is held still to lack the virtue of completeness. If it is the admiration of reformers, in some respects it still needs the hand of reform.

The chief amendments to these laws which Liberals propose relate to Child Labour, to the Hours of Work, to Safety, and to the conditions of Home Work.¹

A century ago, little children, many of them only five or six years old, were allowed to work in the factories ; often they toiled for sixteen hours in the day ; sometimes they were chained to the machines and beaten with whips to prevent them from falling asleep through exhaustion. The first Factory Act, passed in 1802, was aimed at their rescue. Since that time, measure after measure has been passed limiting the hours during which children may be employed, and raising the age at which they may begin work. But still the State allows children as young as twelve years old to be sent to the mills to work half-time, spending the other half of the day at school ; children of thirteen may work full time in any industry, even in the underground work of the coal-mines ; children of all ages may be put to many kinds of labour, for any period, outside school hours. The age standard in England is among the lowest in Europe.²

¹ On the general question of State regulation of industry the reader may be referred to *Industrial Democracy*, by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and to the little book recently published under the editorship of Mrs. Webb, *The Case for the Factory Acts*. Both these books contain bibliographies of other works on the subject.

² The statutory ages in the chief countries are as follows—
England : 12 ; in mines, 13 ; children engaged in farm work may be employed between the ages of 11 and 12 for half the year ; in factories and workshops only half-time may be worked until the age of 13 or 14, according to the educational standard reached by the child.

Germany : 13, and then conditionally on primary education being complete.

France : 13, or 12 if furnished with medical and educational certificates.

Austria : 14, in factories ; 12, in other occupations ; but from 12 to 14 school must be attended for twelve hours a week, and the work must be easy and not injurious to health.

Switzerland : 14.

Belgium : 12.

[P. T. O.]

We have already spoken of the effect of child labour on education and on all the issues that depend on education, and we have spoken of the urgent need for extending the period allowed for schooling. Physically, the results of child labour are known to be injurious. It has long been noticed that factory workers are inferior in physique to those whose employment is out of doors; the reason may be partly traced to labour in close air during the period of growth. The work the children are called upon to do is, no doubt, usually, although not always, of a light character.¹ But whether light or heavy, the factory and the mine cannot be substituted for the school and the playground without a penalty

Sweden: 12, if furnished with medical and educational certificates, and school must in any case be partially attended until the age of 15.

In fourteen of the United States the age is 14, with some exceptions; in most of the others 13 or 12.

Holland, 12; Hungary, 12, with some exceptions; Norway, 12, with partial school attendance; Russia, 12, with either educational certificate or partial school attendance up to 15.

Only in Denmark, Italy, Spain and Portugal is the standard lower than our own. It should be remembered, however, that in southern countries children mature more rapidly than in northern. (See Brooke, *Factory Laws of European Countries*, published in 1898; and for the United States, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour*.)

¹ The two following cases, taken from the *Annual Reports of the Factory Inspectors*, are typical of many others that might be quoted.

"If a jute-spinner works hard, the little shifter works harder. Often have I watched the latter continuously at work for long spells, rushing from one machine to another, with bare feet, and perspiring copiously in the stifling heat. . . . These little creatures are diminutive when they commence work at 11 years of age" (the statutory minimum at the time this report was written), "and the circumstances under which the majority of them labour are such that bodily growth is certainly not encouraged or fostered thereby." (*Report for 1897*, p. 70.)

"I have taken burdens from the arms of children both in Dundee and in Lancashire, the weight of which went far to account for the stunted forms and drawn faces which are to be seen among the young persons in factories there." (*Report for 1895*, p. 119.)

being paid in undeveloped bodies as well as in un-instructed minds. A race of child workers does not grow up into a race of sturdy men. If the labour of young children were stopped, the economic loss to the country would be small; there would be a later gain in strength and intelligence among the adult workers which would far outweigh the trifling cost.

The nation could well afford to do without child labour. But could the individual do without it? The opposition to a further rise in the minimum age comes chiefly from the parents. To many a workman who finds it difficult at the week-end to make his wages cover his expenditure, it seems very hard that the law should step in and prevent him from sending his children to earn money at the earliest possible date. He is poor. To feed and clothe the children is a heavy charge. He looks forward eagerly to the time when, instead of being a burden, they will be a means of increasing the family income. He counts the months until that time shall arrive, and naturally he protests when reformers propose that it should be still further postponed. But it is by no means so certain as it appears at first sight that to stop child labour will make the family poorer. When it is the custom for children to work, the father can afford to accept lower pay for his own labour; since he can afford to accept it, the employers will compel him to accept it; and many cases can be quoted to show that in towns where a large number of children are employed in the staple trades, the wages of adults are lower, other things being equal, than in towns where a small number of children are employed.¹ And it cannot be essential to the comfort of the working-classes that young children should be made to labour, for the simple reason that in very many places working-class families are comfortable although the young children are not employed. The half-time system exists in hardly any of our trades

¹ See on this point Ely, *Introduction to Political Economy*, p. 221; and the Hon. Carroll D. Wright's *Sixth Annual Report of the Labour Bureau of Massachusetts*, p. 51.

except the textiles, and only there in certain branches. In Bradford there were lately nearly 7,000 half-timers, and in Blackburn nearly 6,000. But in Manchester there were only 420, in Leeds only 132, in Birmingham only 14, and in Newcastle-on-Tyne, in Wolverhampton, Reading, York and Southampton there were none.¹ Can it be believed for a moment that the working-people of Bradford and Blackburn would be seriously injured if they were merely brought to the same level, with regard to the earnings of children, which already actually prevails among the working-classes of so many other prosperous towns?

Sometimes, no doubt, hardship may be caused for a time. Few reforms cause hardship to no one. The law that prevented children six, seven or eight years old from working in the mills must have undoubtedly brought temporary hardship to some parents. The law that raised the age to ten brought temporary hardship. The law that raised it to eleven brought temporary hardship. The law that raised it to twelve caused some hardship again. But no one denies that those laws were necessary, and no one would wish to go back to the old conditions. If a further extension causes once more hardship for a time, the evil must be borne, for vital interests of the children, and through them of the nation, are at stake, and they may not be neglected for the sake of trifling additions to the parents' weekly incomes.

It was only in 1900 that the minimum age of employment in all industries except agriculture was raised to twelve, and in mines to thirteen. Further progress must be gradual. But until the best standard of child protection now prevailing in other countries is enforced here, this part of the work of social reform will be far

¹ *Report of the Education Department on the Employment of Children (Half-Timers)*, 1897; the figures relate to the year 1895-6.

In 1900 there were 89,036 half-time scholars attending the schools. The number has been nearly halved in nine years. (*Education Department—Statistics of Schools*, 1901, p. 109.)

from complete and the duty of the State in this will be very imperfectly done.

We turn to the question of the Hours of Labour.

If we wish our nation to be intelligent and thoughtful, the working-classes, who form four-fifths of its numbers, must have leisure for self-education and thought. If we wish to make good citizens, the people must be allowed time to attend public meetings, to take part in political organizations, to perform all the varied duties of the citizen. If family life is important, leisure to enjoy family companionship is important. If the nation is to be healthy in mind and body, its members must have opportunities for sufficient amusement and physical rest. In many ways the amount of leisure is seen to be a matter of supreme importance to the happiness of the individual and to the good of the State. But our industrial system demands from most of; the work-people a daily labour of ten hours, from no small number of eleven, from many of twelve.¹ Hundreds of thousands of men and women, day by day and year by year, go to their work in the early morning, return to their homes late at night, enjoying few intervals beyond the Sunday rest, and even that sometimes denied. In their unending struggle to obtain a livelihood, life itself is absorbed and lost.

The workers themselves are for the most part fully awake to the evil of long hours. But in many trades they can themselves do little to check it. They ask the help of the State. The Trade Union Congress every year declares in favour of an Eight Hours' Bill. Again and again great popular agitations have been set on foot to press the demand. Sooner or later the question must come to an issue, and be made a test at Parliamentary elections throughout the country, as the Miners' Eight Hours Bill is already made a test in most of the constituencies where the mining interest is powerful.

¹ See the evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour throughout.

We propose therefore to review, very briefly, the chief points that have arisen in the long controversy on State regulation of the Hours of Labour.

Let us take *A.* to be an advocate, *B.* to be an opponent, of a Bill for shortening hours.

A. begins by urging the many advantages, on which we have already dwelt, of longer leisure. *B.* answers in the first place, perhaps, that it is very doubtful whether shortening hours would have any other effect than to increase the opportunities for drinking and gambling. It would be very well if we could be sure that the working-classes would use their leisure to read, to make themselves good citizens, and so forth; we can not be sure that they would do anything of the kind. *A.* replies, "To take so low a view of the character of the English working-classes is exceedingly unjust. It is not the majority," he would say, "but the minority, who are drunkards and gamblers, and these are made so, in large measure, by the confinement for long hours in hot work-rooms that breeds a craving for drink, and by the monotony of long days of unvaried labour that breeds a craving for any form of excitement. Grant leisure, and the people will soon learn to employ it profitably. 'It is only,' as Professor Marshall says, 'through freedom to use leisure as they will, that people can learn to use leisure well.' In time, new forms of healthy amusement and useful occupation will be supplied to meet the new demand. Shorter hours, combined with better education, will raise the whole standard of living, and bad customs will gradually disappear. In any case, you have no right to punish the whole for the fault of the part. The Duke of Wellington once said that to establish cheap 'parliamentary' fares on the railways, would merely be to 'give the working-classes an inducement to go aimlessly wandering about the country.' Your argument that to shorten hours would merely be to invite the working-people to waste their time, is not a whit less absurd and not a whit more justified by common-sense."

"Accepting for the moment your optimist view," *B.*

proceeds, "and assuming that shorter hours are to be desired in theory, in practice they cannot be obtained. If men work for eight hours instead of for ten or twelve, they will do much less work in the day; less wealth will be produced; and your reform will only have the result of making the country as a whole poorer, and the working-classes poorer as well. Short hours are a luxury, and a luxury which, in the present condition of things, we cannot as a nation afford."

"It does not at all follow," answers A., "that shorter hours mean less work. There are facts to prove that this is not always the case. Many employers have clearly shown, by actual tests, that the working-day can be reduced from twelve hours to ten, and from ten hours to eight, and, without any reduction of wages, the yearly profit of their business will remain the same.¹ If you ask how this can possibly be so, the answer is simple. The men work best when they are not overworked. An artizan or labourer who begins his day after an evening's recreation, a good night's rest, and a meal in the morning, works briskly, persistently, and carefully. Experience shows that he can get through in his short day as much work, or more than as much, as one who starts in the early morning unfed and already tired.² No one would think it economical to keep a horse in the harness for twelve or fourteen hours every day. The

¹ For particulars of a number of cases see Rae, *Eight Hours for Work*. Also Webb and Cox, *The Eight Hours' Day*; Hadfield and Gibbins, *A Shorter Working Day*.

² The experience to this effect of a number of employers is very striking. See in Mr. Rae's book the evidence of Mr. Greg, cotton manufacturer; Mr. Darbishire, slate quarry owner; Sir J. W. Pease and Mr. J. Connel, colliery owners; Messrs. S. H. Johnson and Co. and Mr. James Keith, engineering manufacturers; Messrs. William Allan and Co. and Messrs. Short Brothers, ship-builders; Messrs. Rylands and Co., glass bottle manufacturers; Mr. Mark Beaufoy, jam and vinegar manufacturer; Messrs. Brunner, Mond and Co., Messrs. Burroughs, Welcome and Co., the St. Rollox Alkali Co., chemical manufacturers, and many others. See also the *Trade Unionist* of November 1898, for a further account of the experience of Messrs. Short Brothers; and the *Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops*, 1894, p. 222.

animal would soon be exhausted and valueless. To work men too long at a time is just as wasteful. Short hours are not, in fact, to be looked upon in the light of a luxury. They are the means of getting from the labourer the maximum of labour force. Of course, this argument would not support an unending diminution of hours. You cannot go from eight hours to six, from six to four, from four to two, and expect at the end to have as much work done as you had at the beginning. But there is a point at which the output per head is at its greatest, and the facts show that this point is reached when the ordinary working-day is one of about eight hours. And there is another reason why this period is often the most economical. With a ten or twelve hours' day the work is done in three spells, with two breaks for meals. With an eight hours' day the work is done in two spells, with only one break. A few minutes are always lost whenever work is stopped and whenever it begins again; if machinery is used, the fires for the engines have to be kept up during the intervals while the workers are away. By arranging the working-day so that only one break is necessary, saving is made possible in both these directions, and the difference is not so trivial as those who are not practically acquainted with the management of industry often suppose. There is yet a third cause that makes the eight hours' system successful economically. A shorter working-day for the men often allows a longer working-day for the machines. The shift system can be more easily introduced. Instead of the plant being used by one set of men for ten or twelve hours, it can be used by two sets for sixteen hours, or even by three sets for twenty-four hours; the manufacturer can get a larger return on the capital he has sunk in buildings and machinery, and is able to lessen his expenses in proportion. All these things make it quite possible in many trades to shorten the hours without making any difference whatever in the cost of production."

"Very well," says *B.*, "you say that this can be done in many trades. But what about the trades where it

cannot be done? You will not suggest, for instance, that a tramway company can lower the hours of its drivers and conductors from twelve to eight without a large increase in its labour bill, or else a reduction in wages."

"There are such cases, no doubt. Sometimes the men are willing to buy the boon of longer leisure by consenting to a reduction of wages. Sometimes profits may be exceptionally large and can afford to bear the brunt. And there may be instances where prices should go up. If your tramway company is able to charge halfpenny fares only through working its men unreasonably long hours, halfpenny fares are proved, by that very fact, to be too low, and they ought to be raised. Besides, the methods of industry are always improving. New machinery is invented when labour becomes dear. New processes are invented. Work is better organized. Workmen become year by year more intelligent and capable. It is known, for example, that, through these causes, three operatives in the woollen industry can make as large an output now as four could make only twenty-five years ago, and one miner can now raise as much coal as three could raise in the 'forties.¹ This gradual improvement allows wages and profits to rise and prices to be lowered. Why should it not allow hours to be shortened as well? Your tramway company, for example, might be able to save considerably by running its cars by electricity. Why should not the tramway-men get some part of the benefit from the invention of electrical traction, in the form of shorter hours, as well as the public in a cheaper and quicker service, or the shareholders of the company in larger dividends?"

"Still," *B.* answers, "there may be cases where the cost of production would be raised, where the men would refuse to take lower wages, and where a long time might elapse before the trade could make good the loss by new inventions or in other ways. You cannot be certain that these causes will always act. And if they do not act, the trade may be absolutely ruined by foreign competition. Shorter hours in such cases would enable other

¹ Mulhall, *National Progress in the Queen's Reign*, pp. 36, 46.

nations to undersell us and drive us out of the world's markets. All that you have said is little more than theory. The practical effect of a general Eight Hours' law might easily be to hamper manufacture to such an extent that some of the chief trades of the country would be seriously injured, or even destroyed. The risk is far too great to run."

As a rule the advocate of State regulation would admit that a hard-and-fast law might possibly be disastrous for a time to particular industries, and he would agree that the danger would be enough to prevent any measure being passed which should rigidly apply to all trades alike.

"Very well," the opponent then says, "in some trades the hours may safely be shortened, but not in others. Now, how are you to distinguish which trades are in the one class and which are in the other? Is Parliament to appoint a Royal Commission to go round the country, examining the conditions of each industry, finding out whether an eight hours' day would mean less production, how far foreign competition is to be feared, whether the work-people would accept wages lower in proportion, and so on?"

"By no means," *A.* answers. "The matter should be left to those who have a life-long knowledge of the conditions of each trade—to the masters and men engaged in it. The law should be a 'Trade Option Law.' A vote, of the employers and employed together, should be taken by the Home Office in any trade where a certain number of persons petitioned to that effect. If a considerable majority, say two-thirds, voted in favour of shortening hours to eight, or to nine, or to ten, or to any number that might be fixed by the vote, then the Home Office should have power to enforce their decision, as it now enforces the various rules in the Factory Acts relating to hours. A long agitation would no doubt take place before the vote was given, and all the *pros* and *cons* would be fully discussed. If the trade was likely to be injured by the change, the working-people know that they themselves would be the greatest sufferers. Their

own interest would make them careful enough not to take the step if there was a real risk in it. And if they did vote in favour of reducing hours, and found by experience that they had made a mistake, they could soon go back to the old conditions by a second vote."

"Even if I were to admit," says *B.*, "that a popular vote, of perhaps a hundred thousand men, could be trusted to decide rightly a delicate matter of this kind—and I do not admit it for a moment—there are practical difficulties which would make it impossible to draft such a law. You cannot define in an Act of Parliament so vague a term as a 'trade.' You cannot draw a line between one 'trade' and another 'trade.' In the Sheffield cutlery industry, for instance, there are thirty or forty handicrafts. Are these to be treated separately or together? Besides, you would not be able to make any register of the masters and men engaged that would not be open to all kinds of objection."

A. replies that these technical difficulties need not be insuperable. A permanent Commission, or a special branch of the Home Office, might be appointed, which would map out industry into trades, would compile a register in each, when it was called for, as the register of Parliamentary voters is compiled, and would deal with other points of detail as they arose. And if the administration of the law were not quite perfect, the position would still be infinitely better than now, when method of any kind in the regulation of hours is wholly absent.

But the opponent has still one or two further objections of a different kind.

"If, as you urge, hours can often be shortened without lessening production, why not leave the matter in the hands of the employers? They have no wish to overwork their men. Nor do they wish to keep their machinery going longer than is needed. If the eight hours' day does not prevail already, it must be because it is found too costly."

A. answers, "Many of the most progressive employers have, as a matter of fact, adopted the eight hours' system. In addition to forty-seven thousand men employed by

various Government departments and local authorities, fifty-four thousand in private employment have been granted the short day since 1893. None of the former, and only 3 per cent. of the latter, have had to go back to the longer hours.¹ If other employers do not do the same, it is because they are too indifferent to take the trouble of reorganization when there is no advantage to themselves in prospect; or else it is because the change might bring the risk of some temporary loss, and this risk they will not take unless outside pressure is brought to bear."

"But State action has clearly many difficulties. Why not leave the Trade Unions to decide the question?"

"Because the unions only include a fourth of the working-men. Because in many trades where they exist they are powerless. Because where they would be able to act they have usually already acted, and the hours least need the change. And because to invite the unions to deal with the matter is to invite a succession of great strikes. On the one hand, those who suffer most from long hours would be neglected; on the other hand, a wide field would be opened for fresh conflicts between capital and labour."

"There are still two more points," says the opponent. "In the first place you are proposing deliberately to interfere with the way in which employers choose to manage their business, and the State has absolutely no right to do this."

"The right of the employer," says A., "does not include the right to impose on labour whatever conditions he chooses. His functions are to decide what goods shall be produced, to select his men, and to choose his methods of manufacture. But matters closely touching the well-being of those whom he employs cannot be left to his uncontrolled will. The Factory Acts interfere with him in a score of ways, but no one objects to the principle of the Factory Acts. It is the workers, and not the employer, who are entitled

¹ *Labour Department Report on Changes in Rates of Wages and in Hours*, 1901, p. xxv.

to fix the number of hours for which they themselves shall labour, and the State may justly help them to do this."

"But you will be interfering also with the freedom of the workers. You will be forbidding men to work as long as they choose. Parliament may be entitled to fix the hours of women and children, who are least able to help themselves, but it has never interfered with the hours of men, and it has no right whatever to say that a workman shall be punished if he prefers to work for ten hours in the day instead of eight."

"Parliament," answers *A.*, "has, as a matter of fact, dealt with the hours worked by men. It has done so directly by the Act to prevent overwork on railways, by various measures fixing hours in some of the dangerous trades, and by the laws that forbid Sunday trading; it has done so indirectly by the Acts limiting hours in the textile factories. The latter ostensibly only affect women, young persons and children. It was fully known, however, when these measures were passed that the mills could not go on working after the time when the women stopped, and that to limit the hours of women would inevitably have the effect of limiting the hours of men also. But whether these are precedents or not is of very little importance. Precedent-mongering is not statesmanship. If Parliament never acted except on precedent, legislation could never progress at all. The measure is either desirable or it is not desirable. If it is desirable, the fact that there may have been no measures exactly similar passed in previous years would be a very empty reason for rejecting it. And as for interference with liberty, it is absurd to pretend that liberty will be lessened, when the Act would do no more than carry out the decisions, declared in a definite vote, of the majority of the work-people themselves. No doubt the minority will have to give way. But in industry there must be a 'common rule.' You cannot have two-thirds of the men in a factory working for eight hours, and one-third working for ten hours. All must work for the same period; and if, by

refusing to legislate, you allow the two-thirds to be compelled to work longer than they wish, while by legislating you will only be compelling one-third to work for shorter hours than they wish, it is surely a very strange doctrine of liberty that would rather have the greater number coerced than the smaller."

In the Liberal party there are many who think the answers of *A.* satisfactory, consider that the advocates of the reform have reason on their side, and are willing to support an Eight Hours' Bill with Trade Option. But there are many also who are doubtful whether the trade of the country would not, after all, be seriously injured, and foreign manufacturers given a handicap in the race for trade. There are some also who are by no means convinced that the practical difficulties in administering such a law could be satisfactorily overcome. The question is still in the stage of discussion and experiment, and the measure has not been given a place among the acknowledged aims of the party.

There is disagreement, then, on the subject of a general regulation of the hours of labour. But there is agreement, among the majority of Liberals, in favour of regulation in two particular cases. One is the case of mines. In most mines, it is true, the unions have already established an eight hours' day. But there is no security that it will remain. At any time employers might insist on longer hours, and the unions may at any time be plunged into a struggle to defend the ground they have won. And in Northumberland and Durham, while the men work eight hours, the boys underground are made to work ten. As a safeguard against possible attack, and as a means of securing better conditions for the collier-boys in the north, the greater number of miners ask for legislation fixing an eight hours' day for all who are employed in the dangerous and cheerless work of the mines. The main body of the Liberal party in the House of Commons support the Bill which the Labour members yearly introduce.

The other case is that of shops. Here the need of State action is exceptionally urgent, and the difficulties in the way exceptionally few.

In hardly any class of employment is overwork so widespread, in hardly any is it carried to so shocking an extreme, as in shop employment in our large towns. In some of the best shops in the wealthiest districts the hours indeed are not unreasonable. But these are only a few bright patches on a very dark picture. To the average assistant an eight hours' day would seem a relief beyond the range even of imagination. A ten hours' day would be an immense improvement on his present conditions. Often he would be grateful if his working-day could only be reduced to a maximum of twelve hours. Except in the few cases of which we have spoken, rarely does the shop-assistant end his week's work without counting sixty-six hours of labour in the six days; more often they are seventy-two; frequently they are as many as eighty, sometimes as many as ninety.¹ "Shop slavery" is an unpleasant term. But it has come into common use, and it describes a fact.

The employment is not a healthy one. The air is confined. In the evening, if gas is used, it becomes noxious. A few years ago, three hundred London doctors, including almost all the leaders of the profession, petitioned Parliament in favour of the Early Closing Bill, stating as the result of their experience that the excessively long hours, in these conditions, seriously injured the health of those employed, particularly of the women and young girls; and recently the President of the Royal College of Surgeons declared that "there is no doubt to my mind that such long hours must contribute to the incidence of disease; that it must lower the general vitality of the persons so engaged, and render them more liable than they otherwise would

¹ See, throughout, the evidence before the Select Committees of the House of Commons on the Shop Hours Bills of 1886 and 1891, before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Early Closing Bill of 1901, and the evidence before the Labour Commission, Group C., vol. iii. 30,667 to 33,532.

be to attacks of different forms of disease, and most especially on account of the long hours at night which such a period of work during the week entails. These hours, too, for the most part are worked in an atmosphere very prejudicial to health, and we know how largely the air so contaminated contributes to the production of various forms of disease." But apart from the effect on health, what kind of home life can there be, what chance of intellectual development, and what opportunity for wholesome amusement, for men and women whose daily work absorbs twelve or thirteen hours of their time?

The need of reform, then, is exceptionally urgent. And the obstacles are exceptionally few.

It may be difficult to define a "trade." But it is not difficult to define a shop. Manufacturers are exposed to foreign competition. But no one would suggest that early closing in England would lead people to go to the shops of France for their groceries, of Germany for their meat, or of America for their clothing. The employers often resist a shortening of hours in other industries. But almost every Tradesmen's Association has resolved in favour of an Early Closing Bill,¹ and the shopkeepers compete with the assistants which shall do most to help end an evil injurious to both and profitable to neither. If local authorities were charged with the duty of fixing the hours of closing, they would not find it hard to arrange them so as to cause little inconvenience to purchasers.

Individual shopkeepers are rarely in a strong enough position to close early, because they would lose business through the competition of neighbours who refused to do the same. "One man told me," said a witness before the House of Lords' Committee, "that five or six years ago he thought he would try earlier closing for himself. He tried it for twelve months, and his trade dropped off one-half owing to the fact of his competitors remaining

¹ See the Evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 1901.

open. He showed me the figures.”¹ Combinations among shopkeepers are seldom more successful. For more than half a century powerful associations have been trying to stop the evil by voluntary action, but the position now is as bad as, or worse than it was at the beginning. The temptation for one or two tradesmen to remain open, in the hope of attracting customers who pass by during the time that the rival shops are closed, is too great to be long resisted; and in Birmingham, for example, single obstinate shopkeepers have again and again stopped movements for early closing in important groups of trades in extensive districts.² The case for legislation is overwhelmingly strong; so strong, indeed, that the House of Commons in 1893 resolved, without a division, that legislation was necessary, and even a Select Committee of the House of Lords unanimously reported to the same effect. A law to secure fuller leisure to the great classes of shopkeepers and shop-assistants is among the immediate aims of Liberal reformers.³

¹ Evidence before the Committee, p. 39.

² *Ibid.* 26. A number of other cases will be found described in this report.

Time after time questions in the following form were put to representative tradesmen who gave evidence before the Committee, and time after time similar answers were given—

“You represent over eight hundred butchers’ shops throughout the kingdom, I believe?—Yes.

“And what are your hours at present?—Our hours at present are from eight o’clock in the morning until eight in the evening on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; till nine o’clock in the evening on Friday, and till midnight on Saturday.

“Do you think these long hours are at all necessary?—I think those hours could be shortened to the advantage both of the shopkeeper and the public.

“Have you any hope of getting shorter hours by voluntary action?—Not the slightest; there is no chance of any voluntary combination among butchers holding good.”

(P. 61. See also pp. 135, 137, 149, 163, 164, 169, 174, 187, 190, etc. etc.)

³ The demand is also made that a limit should be put to the amount of overtime required from assistants after the shops are closed to the public, and further, that the provisions of the Factory

In few things has the State done more to improve the conditions of employment than in lessening the causes of industrial accidents and industrial disease. In few things has its action been more necessary. Unless the employer is unusually careful, or unless the State intervenes, the worker is often exposed to innumerable dangers and innumerable discomforts. Dust, damp, extreme cold, extreme heat, atmosphere full of fumes, poisonous materials, insufficient air, imperfect sanitary appliances; and unfenced machinery, the collapse of scaffolds, the breaking of chains, the bursting of emery-wheels, careless shunting on the railways, explosions and falling roofs in the mines—all these take a heavy toll of life and limb and health from the workers engaged in the numberless trades of a busy industrial country. In a single year accidents at their work kill no fewer than four thousand, and injure more or less severely over eighty-four thousand of the men and women employed in our chief industries.¹ At this rate, in every twelve years a million work-people are injured at their work, and nearly fifty thousand lose

Acts securing proper ventilation and sanitation, and regular intervals for meals, should be extended to shops.

The custom of "living-in" is also denounced and its suppression demanded. In England—there is no such custom in Scotland—it is a common practice for large shopkeepers to require their assistants, as a condition of employment, to lodge and board in houses kept by the employers themselves. It is a strange survival, among establishments counting their scores and hundreds of employees, of the customs that prevailed when each shopkeeper was helped by his one or two apprentices, who slept in his house and ate at his table. The practice is a grave invasion of liberty. The accommodation provided and the fare may be bad, there may be no privacy in these homes, irritating restrictions of all kinds may be imposed, but if the assistant wishes to change his lodgings, he can only do so at the cost of losing his situation. When workmen were compelled to buy household goods from shops kept by the employers, grave abuses arose, and Parliament forbade the practice by the Truck Acts. The shop-assistants are said to suffer from a grievance similar in kind and not less injurious in effect, and Parliament may again find that intervention is necessary.

¹ *Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics*, 1898-9, published by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, 1900, p. 148.

their lives. "War its thousands slays, peace its ten thousands," and the ordinary course of commercial industry shows a roll of killed and wounded as great as that of an army engaged in a hotly-contested campaign. And the amount of sickness caused by unhealthy workplaces, and by what are termed "trade diseases," is known to be vast, though it is, of course, incalculable in figures.

If Parliament had not passed many laws for the workers' protection, the suffering would inevitably be far greater even than it is. The Mines Regulation Acts, for example, have succeeded in reducing the number of miners yearly killed at their work by no less than two-thirds in forty years,¹ one of the best instances of the beneficent effect of wisely-directed State action. The Merchant Shipping Acts have largely lessened the risks of sailors at sea. Turn over the pages of the bulky annual report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, and you will see how minute and how far-reaching is the action of Government in defence of the safety of those who labour in factories and workshops. Still there is this great yearly total of accident and disease. Still you may find an inspector reporting, "In the course of some visits after midnight last winter, I came upon several of these work-places"—excluded from the Factory Acts by a technical defect in the law—"where women, girls and children were at work under deplorable conditions, dirty rooms, foul gassy air, and overcrowding."² Still you may read of inspectors finding women at work in one factory in a temperature of 120°, in another factory in a temperature of 45°.³ Still you may learn

¹ Fatal accidents per thousand miners employed : yearly average for the years 1851-1855, 5·15 ; 1891-1895, 1·70.

In 1872 the Mines Regulation Act was passed. It is instructive to note that the average of fatal accidents underground for each of the years 1866-1870 was 4 per thousand ; for the years 1871-1875 it was 2·7 per thousand. (*Report of Chief Inspector of Mines*, 1897, Plate 6.)

² *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories*, 1900, p. 271.

³ *Ibid.* p. 256.

that "many manufacturing processes are carried on in basements and dark rooms where the gas is alight all day."¹ And still, in such trades as lead-working, match-making, glass-polishing, file-cutting, iron-enamelling, chemical-working, and pottery-making, large numbers of the workers contract, and not a few contract with fatal results, diseases which are known to be preventable by slight modifications in the methods of work.²

The reforms needed are reforms of detail, too detailed to be specified here. They would extend the provisions of the Factory and Workshops, the Mines Regulation and the Merchant Shipping Acts. They would enlarge the scope of the Board of Trade rules applying to railways, and of the Home Office rules applying to "Dangerous Trades." They would aim at a stricter administration of all these various measures. But although questions of detail, they are none the less important as a means of improving the conditions of employment; they are none the less necessary to the comfort and happiness of large classes of workers; and they are none the less worthy of the earnest support of the friends of social reform.

¹ *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories*, 1900, p. 132.

² See the *Reports of the Home Office Departmental Committee on Dangerous Trades*, 1899 and previous years.

The case of the women engaged in one of the processes of china-manufacture, termed "scouring," is among the most striking that can be given. Longton in Staffordshire is the centre of the industry.

Death-rate from lung-disease per thousand per annum of women between the ages of 15 and 70—

	Among the whole female population of Longton.	Among the women engaged in "china-scouring."
1896	4·2	75·0
1897	4·6	68·9
1898	5·5	75·0

(*Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories* for 1898, p. 163.)

In three years, 1895-8, out of 4,700 persons working at the lead processes in the pottery district in N. Staffordshire, no fewer than 1,085, or 23 per cent., suffered from lead-poisoning. (*Report of Profs. Thorpe and Oliver to the Home Office on Employment of Compounds of Lead in Manufacture*, 1899, p. 7.)

A few years ago, public attention was focussed for a time on the evils of the "Sweating System." The press was filled with vivid pictures of the wretched single rooms in the East and South of London where the home-workers lived, ate, slept, and carried on their poorly-paid handicrafts. Parliamentary Committees sat and collected evidence. They reported. And practically nothing was done. The sweating system still continues unchecked. It seems even to be extending its bounds and enlarging year by year the number of its victims.

The visitor to one of these home-workshops will find boxes or feathers, clothes or boots, shirts, brushes, sacks or fur-skins all about, on the floor, on the meal-table, on the bed; the air filled with particles of fur, or stuffy with the smell of glue, leather or whatever material may be used; and in this air, among these surroundings, the workers live day and night, except for such intervals as they snatch from their labour to gain what amusement may be found in the slum-street or the neighbouring public-house. From early morning till far into the night, they toil for a weekly wage of eight, ten, twelve or fourteen shillings. Scores of thousands of working-women pass their lives, scores of thousands of children are at this moment being reared, in such homes and under such conditions.¹

These home workshops are subject to one or two of the provisions of the Factory Acts and to many of the provisions of the Sanitary Acts.² But the rules are in-

¹ See the various books, pamphlets and reports on the Sweating System, especially the *Report of the House of Lords' Committee*, 1890, and the *Report of the Investigation Committee of the Women's Industrial Council on Home Industries of Women in London*, 1897. Also the *Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories*, 1900, p. 133.

"The evils of the Sweating System . . . including the insanitary state of the houses in which the work is carried on . . . can hardly be exaggerated." (*Report of the House of Lords' Committee*, p. xliii.)

² An account of the law affecting home workshops will be found in *Home Work and Domestic Industries in England*, a pamphlet by Miss Anderson, the principal Lady Inspector of Factories and Workshops, published in 1900 by the Industrial Law Committee, 5, Palmer Street, Westminster, S.W. Since this account was

complete. Such as they are, they are only loosely enforced ; and they are of a kind exceedingly difficult to enforce strictly.

Two further steps are urged by reformers. One is to enact that no work should be allowed in home workshops unless they are licensed, either by the Sanitary Authority or by the Factory Inspector, and that no licence should be granted unless the place fulfils reasonable conditions as to sanitation, ventilation, and air-space. The other is to extend to home workshops many of the provisions of the Factory Acts from which they are now exempted, particularly the provisions relating to these matters of sanitation, ventilation, and air-space, and to make the employer the party responsible for the observance of the rules. With infinite care and trouble laws have been framed to compel employers to keep their factories and workshops in decent order. If an employer breaks a single one of these regulations he is liable to be prosecuted and punished. But he may break them all with impunity by the simple device of using the homes of the workers as the factory for his business. To allow such an evasion is a stultification of the law. If the employers who have no factories were made as fully responsible as those who have factories, for the healthfulness of the conditions under which their work is done, they would soon make it their business, as some of the best among them already make it their business, to see that the homes of the out-workers shall be of such a kind as to be suitable for carrying on processes of manufacture. By adopting one, or both, of these methods, the State would do much to remove a cause of ill-health and grave discomfort among a large section of the working-classes ; it would do much to check the worst evils of the Sweating System.

These, then, are the chief reforms which Liberals

written, the law has been modified in some details by the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, Part VI.

propose for the improvement of the conditions of private employment. To them must be added some detailed amendments to remove anomalies in the law ; to bring under the Factory Acts some minor trades, such as paper-folding, at present altogether omitted ; to extend the provisions relating to laundry-workers, who are now less protected than most other classes ; to deal with such cases as that of the children, from thirteen to fifteen years of age, who are sometimes employed in the work of fish-curing from six in the morning to twelve at night ;¹ to limit the amount of overtime, often most excessive, which may be demanded from women ; and to deal with a number of other special points of a very varied kind. To them must also be added measures relating to State employment.

No small fraction of the working-classes are in the service of Government departments and local authorities. The State is the largest of employers. It should also, Liberals hold, be the best of employers.

One of its chief aims is to help to "lessen poverty and to lighten its effects." To pay low wages to the workers in its own employment would be to contradict its whole policy. It seeks to ensure leisure to various classes of work-people. It cannot at the same time exact long hours in its own establishments. For the State to debase by bad conditions a part of the people, while it is trying to raise, by improving conditions, the remainder of the people, would clearly be the grossest of inconsistencies ; and undoubtedly the policy of Social Reform, if it leads to nothing else, must lead to the rule that public employment should be model employment.

No doubt cheapness in public works is desirable. Extravagance can never be justified. But there is a cheapness that comes from good management, and a cheapness that comes from stinting the workman of the comforts to which he is entitled ; and this latter kind will not only lower the efficiency of the workers and so

¹ Factory Inspector's Report, quoted in the *Women's Trade Union Review*, October 1901, p. 8.

defeat its own purpose ; it will be a betrayal of one of the main objects for which the State exists.

The force of these arguments is, indeed, widely recognized. The House of Commons, by a unanimous vote, has declared its adhesion to this doctrine. Government work, it has announced, "as regards hours, wages, insurance against accident, provision for old age, etc., should be such as to afford an example to private employers throughout the country."¹ Over a hundred and fifty local authorities have expressed, more or less completely, similar opinions.²

The measures that are now advocated are briefly these. All public authorities, of whatever kind, should fully recognize the principle that public employment must be model employment. They should not be content, as is now often the case, with a merely formal recognition of this principle on their minute-books, but should effectively cause their officials to observe both the spirit and the letter of their instructions. And they should especially secure that no man, whose services are of sufficient value to cause him to be employed at all, should be required to accept a wage below the minimum necessary for decent comfort—a rule which, obviously right though it is, there are many instances to show is now not seldom infringed.

¹ The resolution, passed March 6, 1893, applied specifically only to the naval establishments, but it was recognized in the debate that the precedent should apply to all other establishments as well.

² Return on Urban Sanitary Districts (Conditions of Contracts), 1898.

CHAPTER V

THE LAND QUESTION

IN the United Kingdom there are forty-one millions of people living on a hundred and twenty thousand square miles of land. How to secure that this area of land shall be used for the best advantage of these millions of people—that is the Land Question.

During long periods in the history of England, the landlord class was dominant in the State. It filled one House of Parliament, it nominated the other, it controlled the local government, it monopolized the magistracy, and the powers of the State were actively used for the benefit of the limited section in whose hands they lay. The Reform Act of 1832 brought a much-needed change. Since then Parliament has been continually at work redressing the balance. Customs duties kept the food of the people at a high price in order that the landlords' rents might remain at a high level; those duties have been swept away. Heirs to land paid taxes on their succession at a far lower rate than heirs to property of all other kinds; that inequality has been ended. The one-fifth of the soil of England which two centuries ago was common land had been mostly grasped by the landowners, practically without compensation to the poorer commoners; the remaining commons are protected. Improvements made by a farmer in his holding were held by law to belong to the landlord; now farmers are allowed a partial right to compensation. The landlord alone was entitled to shoot the game which fed on the

farmer's crops ; now the tenant is permitted to kill certain kinds of game. The land hunger in Ireland and in the crofting districts of Scotland allowed rents to be raised to an exorbitant figure ; judicial courts now fix the rentals. Formerly the creditors of a bankrupt landlord could not seize any part of his estate, unless they held a mortgage on it ; this law has been repealed. An owner could secure his land to his family for two generations after his death, no matter how unable his heirs might be, through squandering their resources, to keep up the estate ; the power of the dead hand has been partly lifted, and estates, though entailed, may under certain conditions be sold. The right of property in the soil was absolute ; Act after Act has been passed enabling land to be taken compulsorily for railways, for houses, for allotments, for schools, for a score of objects of public utility. Many of the old abuses have been removed, many harmful privileges abolished. But abuses, almost as gross as any of these, privileges almost as harmful, yet remain, and traces of the long era of landlord power are still written large in the laws and customs of England.

There is a school—or rather there are two schools—of politicians, who hold that no land reform will be fully satisfactory unless it be a complete measure of land nationalization. The soil of the country, they say, will never be used to the best public advantage until the whole of it is made the property of public authorities. Nationalize the land, and the State will be able to foster agriculture and industry by adopting the best systems of tenure ; towns will grow no longer haphazard, but will be developed on a definite plan ; roads and open spaces will be made, houses will be built, where they are most needed and not merely where the convenience of owners directs ; the rentals will swell the national and local revenues and relieve the heavy burdens of taxes and rates ; above all, the “unearned increment” constantly added to the value of land in towns will go to the community which creates it.

One of these schools, represented by the Land Restora-

tion League, holds the view that since land has been made by nature and not by man, individual ownership in it can only have arisen by force or fraud and never by legitimate means. Private property in land, they say, is always theft. To suggest that compensation should be paid when the stolen goods are taken back is clearly absurd. So they propose that a special tax should be levied on land and gradually increased until it reached twenty shillings in each pound of rent. Then the owners would have no interest in keeping the land, and would surrender it to the representatives of the people. The other school, represented by the Land Nationalization Society, admits, on the contrary, that the present owners are entitled to compensation if their property, for public reasons, is taken from them, and would have the State acquire the land by a sweeping measure of compulsory purchase at a fair price. Of these plans the Liberal party opposes the first and does not as a body support the second.

Whether a State management of the land would or would not result in advantage to the public is a point on which there has been much discussion. There are many who urge that jobbery and favouritism would inevitably enter in the granting of leases and the fixing of rents, that farmers would be worse off than now if they had to deal, in the innumerable questions that arise between tenant and landlord, with the officials of a public Board instead of with an individual owner, that town lands might be worse and not better administered if they were all under the unchecked control of Town Councils and other local authorities. We need not stay to enter into these questions. The scheme is faced by prior difficulties.

Accept, if you will, the view that the land of a country originally belonged of natural right to the whole body of the people that inhabited it; the fact remains that private ownership has been recognized by statute and by custom from time immemorial. Admit, if you like, that this ownership began in theft; the fact remains that the present owners are not themselves the thieves, nor for

the most part do they hold their property by inheritance from the thieves. In reliance on established laws, land has been continually bought and sold; a large part of the soil of England changes hands by purchase every generation and every year, and for Parliament suddenly to pass a law seizing, without compensation, at once or after an interval, the estates of those who happen at this moment to own land would clearly be a measure of gross confiscation. One man has saved from his earnings a thousand pounds, has bought with it a field and has let it for building; another has saved an equal sum and has invested it in Consols. To pass a law ruining the one by taxing him twenty shillings in the pound on his income, while the other is left scot-free, is a proposal so flagrantly and obviously unjust that it is strange that any body, however small, of Englishmen should ever have seriously advanced so intolerable a suggestion. And if we are to go back to origins and are to restore the soil to its rightful possessors, what claim have the English people to this heritage? Ought not the land in justice to be given to the Welsh, as the legitimate heirs of the Britons, who, as we know from history, were forcibly dispossessed by the Anglo-Saxon invaders; or even to the Basques of the Pyrenees, or any other people who can prove a relationship to that long-headed race whose skulls are sometimes found in pre-historic barrows, and who seem to have been in this island the earliest owners of the soil of whom the lapse of time has left reliable traces? Such are the absurdities in which we are landed by the theories, pushed to their logical conclusion, of Mr. Henry George and the Land Restoration League.

Rejecting, then, the policy of confiscation, and turning to the policy of land nationalization by purchase, it would appear that the advantage—at all events the financial advantage—likely to result from such a change would probably be small. The Government would be obliged either to borrow money in order to buy out the landlords, or else to give them bonds on the Treasury in exchange for their property. Interest must be paid in either case; and there is no reason to believe that the

rents which would come in, after allowing for the usual deductions and the immense expenses of management, would be much greater than the interest which would be paid out. The State would become, indeed, the universal landlord, but a landlord burdened with a mortgage so heavy that the net receipts would be disappointingly small. And it should not be forgotten that the alternatives before us are not land nationalization on the one hand, the present land system unreformed on the other. Various more moderate measures are within reach that promise almost all the advantages of State purchase of the land without the social disturbance and the financial risks that a scheme of this nature would inevitably entail. The balance of benefit, when these reforms have been taken into account, might only be inconsiderable. Such as it was, a long political campaign would be needed to obtain it. Meanwhile all other movements would necessarily be postponed. The Liberal party, charged with the interests of social reform, of constitutional reform, pledged to carry into law many beneficent measures that now seem ripe for fulfilment, is at the present time unwilling to turn the forces of progress into a prolonged struggle, the success of which would be doubtful, its results, if successful, possibly little more advantageous than the results to be gained from other proposals dealing with the land, and its severity involving the sacrifice meanwhile of many objects not less useful and far more attainable.

To Liberals, then, the phrase Land Reform does not imply a single, heroic, revolutionary change. It covers a number of separate but closely-related proposals. The end in view has been stated. It is that the soil of the country shall be used for the best advantage of the people of the country. The means suggested are these—
measures to secure for the public purse a fair share of the increasing values of urban land, measures to encourage the creation of small holdings in rural districts, measures to adjust the relations between landlord and tenant in country and in town, to facilitate the transfer of land to the persons best able to make use of it, and to secure

that land needed for public purposes shall be easily obtainable. These, with other reforms of detail, make up a body of proposals which would go far to remove the inequalities and abuses that survive from the days when the landlord power was uncontrolled. The first of these, the question of the unearned increment, will be most conveniently discussed when we reach the subject of taxation.¹ To the others we may now turn.

The gradual depopulation of the rural districts is admitted on all hands to be one of the most disturbing features of our time. Between 1851 and 1891 the population of England and Wales increased by 61 per cent.; the number of agricultural labourers decreased by 38 per cent. The census of 1901 showed an increase of three-and-a-half millions in the number of the people; but twelve of the agricultural counties showed a decrease of twenty-eight thousand, in nine others there was practically no growth;² and when the figures of the rural districts and the town districts of these counties are published separately, there is no doubt that the country population taken by itself will show a still more unsatisfactory result. Go into any village of a purely agricultural type and you will almost always hear the same tale, of shrinking population, of scarcity of labour,

¹ See pp. 197-201.

² The administrative counties (that is to say, county areas under the government of a County Council, the larger boroughs being excluded) which show a decline are Cambridgeshire, Devonshire, Herefordshire, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Rutland, Westmoreland, Cardiganshire, Merionethshire, Montgomeryshire and Pembrokeshire. Those which show an increase of less than 2·5 per cent. are Cornwall, Cumberland, Gloucestershire, Lincolnshire, Shropshire, Somerset, Suffolk, Wiltshire and Anglesey. Under the new census, thirty typical registration districts, in nine counties, with a population of 400,000, are found to have decreased by no less than 38,000, or 9·3 per cent., in ten years. One of these districts, in Hertfordshire, showed a loss of 15·5 per cent., another, in Dorset, a loss of 17·3 per cent. (The figures in this footnote have been compiled by Sir Walter Foster, M.P., and are taken from his speech at the National Conference on Housing in Country and Town, held in London on December 3, 1901.)

of less trade in the shops, of dwindling congregations in the churches and chapels, of a general sense of stagnation and decline. The best of the younger men flock to the towns. The English nation is becoming more and more a people of dwellers in cities. And this change is widely recognized to be full of danger to the national future.

The city breeds active minds, but the country breeds sound bodies. The city breeds resourcefulness, the country stability. The city breeds wealth, but the country breeds men. A nation is not in a healthy state when only the town population grows and the rural population is stationary; it is in a very unhealthy state when the town population grows at the expense of the other and the rural districts decline.

Many measures have been suggested with a view to checking this migration. If a number of manufacturers found it to their interest to carry on their businesses in villages instead of in towns much good would result; but the State could help this movement only slightly and indirectly by securing, if possible, a reduction in railway rates. If agriculture could be fostered by laws improving land tenure, by technical education and in other ways, the rate of labourers' wages might rise and there would be less motive to migrate. If the teaching given in rural schools were partly framed so as to instil a greater interest in rural pursuits, the craving for town life might be lessened. To revive, by technical education again, home industries in the villages—lace-making, toy-making, wood-carving and so forth—would help to the same end; and the movement in this direction has without doubt done something to prevent the evil from becoming more acute than it is. Better housing in rural districts is also of great importance in this connection. But reformers fix their chief hopes in a gradual growth in the system of small holdings.

Why is it that now-a-days so many of the young men leave the industry in which they have been trained, the districts in which their families have been rooted for generations, for places that are unfamiliar and employ-

ments that are new? Whoever has mixed with the farm-labouring class and talked over these questions by the cottage firesides, knows that it is not merely the better wages that tempt them away; higher rents in the towns and dearer living largely neutralize this advantage. But town life is interesting and country life is dull; the town gives openings to rise and the country gives none—once a labourer, always a labourer, is the rule in the village; and it is for the sake of the wider interests and more hopeful career which the city is able to extend that the intelligent youths of the village, by tens of thousands, quit their homes and leave the plough. Not until the farm-labourer has the chance of an employment which will absorb him by its interest, and “not until he is offered the prospect of bettering himself by toil and thrift, without deserting his own handicraft, will the industrial competition between town and country be conducted on equal terms.”¹ It is an established fact that in the villages of England where small holdings are numerous the population rarely declines and often increases. The farm-labourer knows that he may perhaps obtain one of these holdings and rise to the rank of an independent cultivator; he may have a piece of soil, which he can regard as his own possession, to till in his own way; he may engage in the occupation which peasants throughout the world find so congenial and absorbing that they will make almost any sacrifice rather than abandon the land on which they have laboured, which contains their home, and to which they are attached by ties not only of self-interest, but of sentiment—few passions are stronger than the love of the peasant for his land. And the farm-labourer in these places may have cases before him, for such cases exist here and there in England, of men who have risen from the allotment to the small holding, from the small holding to the large farm of a hundred, two hundred, or three hundred acres, and have ended their days in positions which, compared to his own, are positions of

¹ Hon. G. C. Brodrick, *English Land and English Landlords*, p. 433.

luxury. A strong motive exists, therefore, to induce him to remain in the district of his birth. But at the present time such villages are few. Usually only one or two pieces of land are available, larger than the allotment of an acre, and smaller than the farm of a hundred acres which is wholly beyond the labourer's reach; and these one or two, more often than not, are in the occupation of the village tradesmen. No matter how keen may be the demand,¹ a holding of five, ten, or twenty acres is seldom to be had. Let an effort be made to supply, wherever the local conditions render it possible, the missing rungs of the agricultural ladder, let holdings of this size be made plentiful, give wide opportunities for the intelligent and industrious labourer to reach a higher status in the only trade that he knows, let men feel that the village as well as the town gives prospect of a career, and then perhaps the depopulation of the country-sides may in a large degree be checked. Farmers would no longer complain that they cannot till the land for want of labour, for the sons of a numerous body of peasantry would be fixed in the villages, and the small holders themselves would be often available to work for wages on the larger farms. And the nation would no longer have to fear that two or three generations hence almost the whole of its population will be city-bred. The reforms are few that hold out prospects of greater advantages. Among the aims of the Liberal party the extension of small holdings has long held a leading place.

It is often objected, however, that the plan, excellent as it may be in theory, would prove disastrous in

¹ For evidence of the widespread intensity of the demand see the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners to the Royal Commission on Agriculture; *e.g.* Mr. Rew's *Report on Wiltshire*, pp. 27 and 30; Mr. Hunter Pringle's *Reports, on Cumberland*, p. 14, *on Lancashire*, pp. 51, 52, *on Lincolnshire*, p. 77, and *on Cambridgeshire*, p. 45. Also in Mr. Richards' *Report to the Labour Commission*, p. 18, and throughout the evidence taken by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Small Holdings, 1889. (See Index to that evidence under heading "Supply and Demand.")

practice. Small holdings, it is said, would not be successful financially. If large farmers find it difficult to make a living, using the best machinery and the best methods, small farmers, without machinery and with less scientific methods, would certainly find it impossible.

Facts point to an opposite conclusion. There is abundant evidence to show that small holdings, when established under proper conditions, succeed.¹ Compared with large farms they enjoy several advantages. They are cultivated chiefly by spade labour, and spade labour brings the heaviest crops.² The corn grown on

¹ See the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Small Holdings, 1889, especially the passages indexed under the heading of "Profits."

The Reports of the Assistant Commissioners appointed by the Royal Commissions on Labour, 1893, and on Agriculture, 1894-95, give further evidence. Reference may be made to the following passages: Labour Commission—Mr. Bear's *Report*, p. 85, relating to Pamber and Tadley in Hampshire, and pp. 134, 142, 154, dealing with cases in the Melton Mowbray Union, Leicestershire; Mr. Chapman's *Report*, pp. 16, 86, North Witchford Union, Cambridgeshire; p. 134, Atcham Union, Shropshire. Agricultural Commission—Mr. Rew's *Reports, on Wiltshire*, p. 29, *on Norfolk*, p. 37, *on Devon*, p. 27, *on Dorset*, p. 32; Mr. Fox's *Report on Lincolnshire*, pp. 70, 71.

Mr. Rider Haggard, speaking at a meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, said, "During nearly the whole of the present year he had been travelling throughout England, and had investigated twenty-five counties, and tried to arrive at the facts of the case. . . . He believed that the rural depopulation had not been at all exaggerated. He had found in almost every district in England that the best young men and women were leaving the land. . . . He could only deal with these small holders as he found them, and he was of opinion that on the whole they were prosperous, and that where they existed the migration from the country to the town was much less pronounced than it was where small holders did not exist." (*Proceedings of the Central Chamber of Agriculture*, November 1901, p. 213.)

There is also much valuable information on the question in *Labour upon the Land*, edited by Mr. J. A. Hobson; in *A Study of Small Holdings*, by Mr. W. E. Bear; in *Allotments and Small Holdings*, by Mr. J. L. Green, and in *Agrarian Temures*, pp. 217-219, by the Right Hon. G. Shaw-Lefevre.

² See the comparative returns from allotments and from large farms.—Dean Stubbs, *The Land and the Labourers*, p. 20.

them is mostly consumed by the cultivator and his family, who thus escape the heavy expenses of carriage and marketing, and need pay little attention to fluctuations in prices. Above all, they excel in the *petite culture* for which large farms are less suited; vegetables, fruit, poultry, eggs, are their speciality; and, with the help of co-operative factories of the kind that have proved so successful of late in Denmark, Ireland, and many other countries, they can produce excellent butter, cheese, hams and lard. Of these commodities we import from abroad, and mostly from countries of peasant farmers, great and increasing quantities,¹ almost

¹ In 1889 the value of the minor agricultural products imported was £36,000,000. In 1899 it was over £55,000,000, an increase of 53 per cent. in ten years.

IMPORTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1899.

	£
Bacon	10,399,000
Butter	17,213,000
Cheese	5,503,000
Condensed milk	1,455,000
Eggs	5,044,000
Flax	2,612,000
Hams	4,094,000
Lard	3,068,000
Pork	1,708,000
Potatoes	1,577,000
Poultry (including game)	785,000
Raw vegetables	1,744,000
	55,202,000

(*Trade of the United Kingdom for 1899, Return published by the Customs House Department, 1900.*)

The value of these imports considerably exceeds that of all the corn and flour imported.

	£
Wheat	22,281,000
Barley	4,950,000
Oats	4,199,000
Wheatmeal and flour	10,701,000
	42,131,000

(*Ibid.*)

all of which could easily be supplied from our own soil if once the system of small holdings were widely established. That certain conditions must be carefully observed is of course admitted. The soil chosen must be suitable for the purposes in view, and must be within reach of markets. The holdings must be provided with roads and adequate buildings. Provision must be made against unduly subdividing the land among the sons of the first tenants, and, possibly, against mortgaging the leases. The rents must be reasonable. The cultivators must be picked men. No one suggests that the whole, or that any large part of the soil of England should be suddenly converted into small holdings. No one supposes that the reform would, in the words of a famous Irishman, "turn our bleak and barren hill-sides into fair and smiling valleys." And no one supposes that any farm-labourer chosen haphazard will prove able to make a small holding succeed. There is a wise proverb among the French peasantry, "As a man is, so is his land." If the cultivators be of a low type, the experiment will inevitably fail.

Whatever measures are taken, therefore, must be carefully framed, gradual in their operation, and administered by men well acquainted with the conditions of each district. But if these points are borne in mind, there is no reason to doubt that in a few years groups of small holders might be successfully established in very many of the villages of England, and that, as time went by, the system would rapidly spread. After careful inquiry, a Committee of the House of Commons on Small Holdings reported unanimously that "the evidence shows that, speaking generally, small cultivators manage to pay their way and to improve their position, and that when they fail, the failure is usually due to the inferior quality of the land or to its unsuitable situation;" it strongly recommended legislation for the encouragement of small holdings. And the recent Royal Commission on Agriculture, a very weighty and a very cautious body, wholly rejected the view that small holdings, under present conditions, cannot succeed, and declared

in its report "that a gradation of holdings from the smallest size upwards is most desirable, and that, under suitable conditions as to soil and situation, small holders can advantageously occupy land."¹

Admitting, then, that this reform is necessary and practicable, what steps are needed to effect it?

Landowners might do much, if they had the will and the means, to create small holdings. Lord Carrington's successful experiments in Lincolnshire, for example, are well known. But to set up small holdings needs expenditure on buildings, fences and roads, which many owners are unable to make, or unwilling to make, for the sake of trifling additions to their rents. Moreover, where there are a number of small farms the country is less adapted for hunting and shooting, and since the claims of sport are, in the opinion of not a few among the landlords, supreme over almost every other consideration, the creation of small holdings is seldom regarded with favour by the members of that class. The course which Liberals specially advocate is to empower County Councils to purchase large farms, to subdivide, adapt and equip them; and the method proposed to this end is an amendment of the Small Holdings Act of 1892.

Under that Act some County Councils—Worcestershire and the Holland division of Lincolnshire may be specially mentioned—have already succeeded in providing land for a certain number of men. But the progress made has been very small. According to the latest figures, only six hundred acres of land had been dealt with in five years.² The comparative failure of the Act has been due, partly to the apathy of the Councils, but more to its own imperfections.

Land for small holdings, unlike land for allotments, cannot, under the existing law, be acquired compulsorily. However urgent may be the need and however suitable the conditions, the landowners, by withholding their

¹ *Report of the Select Committee on Small Holdings*, 1889, p. iv; *Final Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture*, p. 131.

² See the Parliamentary Returns of 1895 and 1898.

consent, can block the scheme. And the Act is aimed rather at the creation of small freeholds than of small tenancies. The occupiers, with rare exceptions, are compelled to buy their holdings; they have to pay down one-fifth of the purchase value of the land, and to pay the remainder by annual instalments, with the exception, indeed, of one-fourth, which may be left as a perpetual rent-charge. But the men are rarely anxious to become owners. They would much prefer to be tenants, with fixity of tenure. They have seldom money enough to furnish one-fifth of the price of the holding, in addition to buying implements and stock and providing for the keep of their family until the first crops are sold. Attempts to create peasant proprietorships have little prospects of success compared with a movement to create small tenancies with security against disturbance.

Two amendments, then, are needed. The first is to concede compulsory powers; the second to give the same facilities for hiring the land as for buying. A reform of this character, coupled with an active agitation to induce the County Councils to make use of the powers given them, and with a movement to organize co-operative dairies on the lines that have been followed, with such brilliant success, in Ireland and elsewhere—these are the chief means which Liberals propose to secure an extension of the system of small holdings.

Lastly, the Crown owns seventy thousand acres of agricultural land, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners own five hundred thousand acres. It may reasonably be asked that suitable portions of these estates should be subdivided for the same purposes.

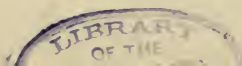
“Folly is that wisdom which is wise only behindhand.” If the nation neglects to insist upon measures such as these, if it delays, until too late, to take the steps that are practicable in order to check the disastrous movement from the country to the town, the Englishmen of a later generation, finding themselves a people all of the urban type, poorer in physique than the English of earlier times, will have bitter cause to complain that, through apathy and short-sightedness, we of this

generation had failed to prevent a notorious cause of national decline.

A second reform would place on a fairer basis the law that governs the relations between landlord and farmer.

"*Quidquid plantatur solo, solo cedit*"—whatever is affixed to the soil belongs to the soil—said the Statute of Gloucester in the reign of Edward I.; and this monstrous doctrine was the law of the land from that time until recent years. Whatever improvements in a farm the tenant might have made with his own capital belonged as of right, not to him, but to the landlord. The Agricultural Holdings Act, passed by one of Mr. Gladstone's Ministries in 1883, at last established, though incompletely, an opposite and fairer principle. In 1900 this Act was usefully amended in some points of detail. But the law is still imperfect, and abuses still occur.

A tenant, for example, takes a farm in poor condition. By a generous expenditure on labour and manures he brings it into a good state; he adds perhaps 40 or 50 per cent. to its value. But the Act gives no right to compensation for "continuous good farming," and at the end of the lease it is the landlord who reaps the benefit. Or the tenant sees that his land will yield a better profit if part of the ploughed fields are turned into pasture, if fruit trees are planted, or if the buildings are repaired. The landlord has not the means, perhaps, to carry out these improvements himself; if he consents to the tenant's doing so he renders himself liable to pay compensation; according to the present law, if he withholds his consent he will have to pay none. He often does withhold his consent. Then the tenant must either move from the farm, a course that always involves heavy expense; or else he must lose the profits he might have made; or else he must carry out the improvements at his own charge, with the risk that, when the tenancy comes to an end, all the money he has spent will be lost to him. The cases are many throughout England of farmers who have been obliged, in order to make their holdings



pay, to spend large sums in making improvements, especially in laying down land to grass, without the landlord's formal consent; and in these cases all their expenditure is liable sooner or later to be confiscated. And an improving tenant is always in danger that his rent may be raised on his own improvements. By good cultivation and by spending capital he makes a holding which he took at a rent of fifteen shillings an acre worth, let us say, a pound an acre. He is unwilling to leave the farm for fear of forfeiting the results of his work. The landlord knows that, if he did leave the farm, another tenant would probably be found ready to pay the higher rent for the improved land. So if a notice is served to the effect that the lease will only be renewed at a rental of twenty shillings an acre, the farmer finds himself helpless to resist; he sees the greater part of the profit of his expenditure transferred to the landowner's pocket. Under such circumstances it is natural that tenants are seldom willing to sink capital in the land for improvements which are not covered by the Act. Or if they do, they take a seven years' lease; in the last two or three years they "farm to leave"; they take exhaustive crops from the soil; they recoup themselves at the end for their expenditure at the beginning, and the land is left when the tenancy is over in no better state than it was at first. So it is that good farming is discouraged by bad laws, and defects in the system of tenure prevent the best use being made of the soil.

It is true, no doubt, that a good landlord will never avail himself of the unfair advantages which he might legally claim. But "laws and institutions," as Mill said, "require to be adapted not to good men but to bad." A single instance of confiscation of this kind will shake the confidence of the farmers of half a county, and it is not strange that enterprising men with capital prefer to invest it in some business where it is less likely to be forfeited, and are unwilling to let their position depend on the chance that a landlord will prove forbearing.

The chief remedies proposed by the Chambers of

Agriculture and by the friends of the tenant farmers in Parliament, with the support of the whole Liberal party, would secure, first, that the tenant should have a right to full compensation for all improvements, of whatever kind, which add to the value of the holding, and secondly, that the tenant should be able to claim this compensation not, as the law now provides, only when he is leaving the farm, but at any time. It is to protect the tenant against his rent being raised on his own improvements that this second proposal is urged ; for if the farmer could claim his compensation at any time, he would be able to recoup himself in this way whenever such an increase of rent was threatened ; the landlord would lose as much as he gained, and the practice of renting on improvements would be effectively stopped. These, then, are the chief reforms necessary in this connection. Whoever recognizes the gravity of the long depression of agriculture, and admits the urgent need of taking any step that is practicable to relieve it, cannot fail to favour these proposals ; for no feasible plan has yet been suggested that promises to do more to attract capital to the land, and to raise the standard and increase the prosperity of British farming.

Other proposals that are often made, and are heartily supported by Liberals, relate to greater freedom of cropping (with due safeguards against injuring the soil), to equality in making claims under the Agricultural Holdings Acts, to compensation for damage done by winged game, to a removal of the existing restrictions on the tenant's shooting of ground game, and to a limitation of the landlord's present right of distraint for rent. But these are matters too technical, they would need explanations too lengthy, to allow them to be properly discussed in the space at our disposal. We must pass on to the third of this group of reforms, to that which would grant to tenants of houses also, a right to fair compensation for whatever improvements they make.

Not even an imperfect law limits the excessive privileges of the house-owner. The lessee of a building, still less fortunate than the lessee of a farm, can legally claim

no penny of compensation for even a portion of his improvements. A tradesman or merchant is obliged by the growth of his trade to enlarge and alter his premises. A shopkeeper, after years of patient effort, has built up a profitable business, has accustomed people to go to his shop, has attached to it a valuable good-will. A tenant adds to the house in which he lives a new wing or another storey, instals the electric light, or puts in a new system of drainage. They hold their premises on lease; the leases come to an end; and then either a higher rent may be exacted on account of the very advantages that the tenants at their own cost have added, or, if they leave to go elsewhere, the whole value of their expenditure and effort falls to the profit of another. Here again improvements are discouraged by the gross injustice of the law, and when they are made, one man is allowed to reap all that another has sown.

These are no imaginary grievances. The Select Committee of the House of Commons on Town Holdings, which sat some years ago, was a body fully as tender to the privileges of the landlord as even the Agricultural Commission itself. Yet the evidence given before this Committee led it to report that "as a rule any improvements which may have been made by the tenant are regarded as the rightful property of the landlord on the termination of the lease, and in such cases rents are commonly raised in consequence of such improvements to the extent of either a part or the whole of the increased value they may have given to the premises"; and further, "it cannot be doubted that cases of hardship do occur in connection with good-will, and that landlords sometimes take an undue advantage of their tenants' position in such cases; and it is clear that when the renewal of a lease of business premises is under discussion, the fact of the tenant having created a valuable good-will gives the landlord considerable power to settle the terms of such renewal in his own favour."¹ If the reader wishes for instances of specific cases where

¹ *Report of the Select Committee on Town Holdings*, 1889, pp. 11, 12.

these gross abuses have occurred, he will find them in plenty in the minutes of the evidence given before this Committee.¹

In this matter the case for reform stands self-evident. No arguments are needed to prove the justice or the expediency of a measure to secure to all leaseholders, when they quit or when their rent is altered, a right to recoupment for any material improvement, and, if some practical difficulties in the way can be overcome, for any good-will, by which they have added to the letting value of their landlord's premises.²

¹ See especially Questions 469, 475, 1773-1849, 3200, 4194-4202, 4214-4265, 4288-4330, 4351, 7185-7, 10,089-94, 11,847-9.

² Some Liberals hold that the leasehold system is bad in principle, and needs, not to be reformed, but to be abolished. A leaseholder has an interest in his house for rarely more than ninety-nine years, and usually less; this, they say, leads to jerry-building, to houses being allowed to fall into disrepair at the end of a lease, to unwillingness to make useful improvements, and to many other evils. In addition, they point to the abuses we have been discussing which arise in the relations between the freeholder and the lessee, and they point to the immense fortunes which ground landlords have been able to accumulate, through no effort of their own, but through the automatic increase in the value of their land. They propose, therefore, a measure of Leasehold Enfranchisement. They would have Parliament pass a law enabling any holder of a lease, that has twenty years or more still to run, to buy out compulsorily the landlord's interest—the price, in default of agreement, to be settled by arbitration, or by a court of law.

But there are other Liberals, who are by no means of less authority in the counsels of the party, who oppose the proposal; and on these grounds—

1. The leasehold system would not be abolished by such an Act. A lease is a convenient means of taking a house, and people would continue to adopt that system. Some of the present leaseholders might be made into freeholders, but they would be likely sooner or later to let their property, and so become landlords in their turn.

2. House-owners, if the law were passed, would be careful never to let for more than nineteen years, so as to escape the danger of being bought out against their will. Whatever are the abuses of the leasehold system at present, they would be made worse by a general shortening of the period of lease.

3. A number of persons owning one or two houses each would manage the property worse than a few large landlords. Buildings could not be made to harmonize with one another; estates could not be developed on a definite plan; the landlords would not be

By far the greater part of the land of England is entailed. The present owners usually have only a life-interest in their estates. They have inherited them from their predecessors under settlements that bind them to surrender the estates intact on their death to an eldest son or other heir-at-law. They cannot sell the land, except on the very unattractive terms allowed by the Settled Land Act of 1882. The system leads to many abuses. Families which, from any cause, become impoverished, are hindered from selling the estates which

open as now to the influence of a public opinion closely watching their action. "Instead of the Duke of Bedford owning Bloomsbury, we should have a few hundred little Dukes of Bedford, each owning a tiny scrap of Bloomsbury." The change might not be an advantage.

4. The unearned increment in the value of town land does not rightly belong to the present leaseholder any more than to the present landlord. It belongs to the community, and a measure to secure it to the community is urgently necessary. If, however, a large number of small freeholders were interested in keeping that unearned increment for themselves it would be exceedingly difficult to carry a measure with that object.

5. It would not be the occupiers who would usually benefit by such a law. Their leases have generally much less than twenty years to run. It would be the persons who have taken a lease from the ground landlord and let the houses again—speculative builders and others—who would gain the advantage, and these have no special claim on the help of the State.

6. Some occupiers do hold leases with twenty years to run, but only a small proportion even of these could afford to buy up the freehold.

7. Leaseholds do not lead to jerry-building, for as a rule the builder is bound by his engagement with the landowner to build houses of a certain character and quality, and it is to the interest of the landowner, since the houses will revert to him or his heirs, to see that they shall be substantially built.

8. A measure to secure to the tenant compensation for improvements and good-will, and a measure to secure to the community the value of the unearned increment, would be methods for removing the abuses of the present system as effective as leasehold enfranchisement and less open to objection.

(See the various publications of the Leasehold Enfranchisement Association, now to be obtained from the Land Law Reform Association, 18 Cockspur Street, S.W.; and especially the reprint of the debate in the House of Commons, April 29, 1891, on the Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill of that year.)

they cannot properly maintain, to those who could use them to better advantage ; buildings, fences and drainage fall into disrepair ; the uttermost farthing is wrung from the tenants ; and the nation suffers through the mismanagement of the soil which is the almost inevitable consequence of these conditions. And landowning families being always at liberty to buy but never to sell, the land tends to fall into fewer and fewer hands. Half the soil of England now belongs to between two and three thousand persons ;¹ successful men of business find it difficult to establish themselves as landowners, and much capital which might otherwise be attracted to agriculture is kept away. Many Liberals, therefore, have urged that the practice of entail should be abolished by Act of Parliament. But the arguments for and against this proposal are too voluminous and complicated to allow us to state them here. It must be enough to mention the subject in passing as one which calls for careful attention, and the reader to whom it is of special interest can only be referred to other sources.²

It is not only the practice of entail, however, which prevents the proper distribution of land. The expenses of transfer are usually inordinate. When a sale is to take place, a lengthy investigation must be made to ascertain that the seller has a good title to the property in question ; an elaborate conveyance has then to be drawn up ; and the lawyers' fees, in the sale of even a small piece of land, make up a total so formidable that a serious obstacle is put in the way of land being transferred from those who wish to sell to those who can make better use of it. In most of the British colonies and in many other countries, all this expense is avoided by the simple plan of registering in a public

¹ Shaw-Lefevre, *Agrarian Tenures*, p. 14. The figures are based on the Return of Landowners, published in 1870.

² The question is fully and ably discussed in *English Land and English Landlords*, by the Hon. G. C. Brodrick. The heads of the arguments on either side will be found in Mr. Sydney Buxton's *Political Manual*. Reference may also be made to *Agrarian Tenures*, by the Right Hon. G. Shaw-Lefevre, and to an article in the *Quarterly Review* of January 1895.

office the boundaries and description of every parcel of land, its owner's title, and the encumbrances to which it is subject. At a trifling cost the name of one owner can be taken out, the name of another owner inserted, and the transaction be made legally complete. Ever since the reign of Henry VIII., attempts have been made at intervals to introduce a similar system into England. In London it has at last been established—though apparently in an imperfect form; and whenever a piece of London land is sold, the title must be registered for future reference under the provisions of the Land Transfer Act of 1897. Liberals urge that the scheme should be perfected and should then be applied to the whole of the country.

Further, the Law of Primogeniture needs repeal. If a man dies without a will, leaving children, his stocks and shares, his business interests, all the possessions which lawyers call personal, are equally divided among those children. But if he leaves land or houses, the whole of these descends to the eldest son. Such a law is admitted on all hands to conflict with the general sense of justice. And it applies not only to large estates, where some reasons of expediency might perhaps be urged. If a tradesman or a working-man, who has saved money and has invested it in the purchase of a villa, a cottage, or one or two fields, dies without leaving a will, as not seldom happens, his eldest son is allowed to monopolize the whole of the inheritance, and all the younger children are left penniless. Even the House of Lords, the very focus of primogeniture, admitted the injustice of this law, and in 1887 passed a Bill, introduced by a Conservative Lord Chancellor, to make the rules for the inheritance of real property the same as the rules for the inheritance of personal; though, indeed, such are the imperfections of even the most august body of men, the House of Lords, soon repenting of well-doing, two years later reversed its action. A resuscitation of this still-born measure, and its addition to the statute-book, stands as an integral part of the Liberal programme of Land Law Reform.

To protect, more fully than the law now protects, the commons that still remain to the people ; to grant to the public the same right in England to roam at will over picturesque lands unused for agriculture as Parliament has already granted in Scotland ; to secure a sufficient number of the recreation-grounds and open spaces which are necessary for the physical exercise, and therefore for the health, of the nation ; to make it easier for local authorities to obtain land for housing, for schools, for all the innumerable needs of a growing and crowded population—these are the remaining measures which Liberals propose.

If some of the less public-spirited among the land-owners protest against a policy of this nature on the ground that it involves interference with their rights, they may be reminded that, although their own class took many millions of acres of land from the people without compensation,¹ the people, more just, is ready to pay full value for the land that it needs. They may be reminded that reforms such as these promise large benefits to the middle-classes and to the working-classes, and that the occupiers of land and houses, who labour and add to the wealth of the community, have at least an equal claim on the good-will of the State as the owners, who do not labour and create no wealth. For if property has its rights, so also has poverty.

¹ Between 1710 and 1867, 7,660,413 acres of common land were enclosed. (*Report of the Royal Commission on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture*, 1869 ; quoted by Brodrick, *English Land and English Landlords*, p. 55.)

CHAPTER VI

THE DISTRESSED

TO carry into effect all the various proposals that have been described would not, of course, end the need for State assistance in dealing with poverty. We might perfect the system of education, improve the housing of the working-classes, encourage their temperance, better their conditions of employment, amend the laws that restrict the use of land—by so doing we should rescue many, no doubt, from unhappiness, and enable many to rise from poverty ; there would inevitably remain a vast amount of distress, and of a kind which the State might help to relieve. The most sanguine advocate of these reforms would be far from claiming that, once they were adopted, destitution would be unknown. The most bitter opponent of State action would hardly suggest that such destitution as remained the State should quietly ignore.

There would still be people incapacitated for work by physical defect or by sickness. There would still be the idle and the dissolute, fallen into distress through their own fault. There would still be large numbers of orphan, deserted and neglected children. There would still be families made destitute by the disablement or death of their bread-winner through some accident while at work. There would still be men and women thrown out of employment by causes beyond their control. There would still be aged people of good character who were too old to work and had been too poor to save. The needs of all these form another group of problems which demand the attention of the social reformer.

The first of these classes, however, already finds relief on settled lines. The insane, the blind, the deaf and dumb, the deformed, the temporarily sick and the permanently ailing, do receive fairly adequate help, partly from the State and partly from institutions independent of the State. Something may be said for the proposal to transfer the voluntary hospitals and asylums to the care of public authorities; but even if it be thought desirable, it cannot be held that the change is urgent.

But to throw on to private charity any large part of the duty of relieving the other classes of the distressed is neither possible nor desirable. It would lay on the generous a burden beyond their strength, and it would lay on the generous alone a burden which should be common to all. The statesman may, in some measure, leave to others the care of the defective and the sick; the needs of the children, the able-bodied, and the old, who have fallen into destitution, clearly come within his province. The methods which Parliament has established for dealing with some of these are open to little objection, and in these cases, again, few reforms are needed.

The idle and the dissolute receive from the Poor Law the help combined with punishment that is suited to their case. The social conscience has decreed that death is too stern a punishment for even the grossest improvidence, and that no man, no matter what his character, shall be left to starve in the streets. But it recognizes also that it is right to treat with some severity those who refuse, though able, to labour. Towards these deserters from the ranks of the industrial army the harshness of the Poor Law is both just and necessary, and though some detailed reforms in its administration may be necessary, there is little wish for a change in its spirit.

And the State has recognized its duty to the orphan and deserted children, and the children of grossly negligent or cruel parents. A vast machinery of relief has been established. Over fifty thousand of these children are now being sheltered, fed, clothed and educated by

the Boards of Guardians at the public expense.¹ In some Unions, it is true, the relief is not given on the best plan. Children are still to be found in the work-houses; and workhouse surroundings and methods, framed for the punishment of the undeserving, are blighting to childhood. Children are still sometimes kept in "barrack schools"—great institutions where individuality has no room to grow, and the training given often fails to fit the inmates for success in after-life.² But every year a larger and larger number of the Boards of Guardians send the children under their care to lodge in the cottages of working-people, or establish for them small homes where a natural family life may be imitated. The children attend the ordinary schools, mix with other children, and so get free from the pauper taint; they are being taught trades; efforts are being made to render their childhood happy. The State is training up useful citizens for its own later advantage; and the lines along which it may best relieve the needs of these innocent victims of misfortune have been clearly laid down, and are being more and more widely followed.

So also in the case of another group of the distressed—the sufferers through industrial accidents. A workman injured at his work, or the family of a workman killed at his work, is given by law a right to compensation. A sum of money may be claimed from the employer, and the employer provides against the liability by means of insurance. But the principle, though established, is not fully applied; the provision is incomplete; and among the Liberal proposals of reform, the amendment of the laws relating to accidents must be given a place. Two statutes deal with the question. There is the Employers' Liability Act of 1881, and there is the Workmen's Compensation for Accidents Act of 1897, with its amendment of 1900. The Liability Act covers

¹ See the Report for 1900 of the admirable *State Children's Association*.

² For the extent to which these systems continue, in spite of the censure of the Local Government Board, see *ibid.*, pp. 3 and 4.

all trades, but, owing to various restrictions, it applies to only a fifth of the accidents in those trades. The Accidents Act applies to practically all classes of serious accident, but it leaves out of account more than a third of the trades.¹ Workmen who are injured by accidents excluded from the one, while they belong to trades excluded from the other, receive no compensation; their families receive no compensation if they are killed. A sailor who loses an arm through an accident at sea, is denied relief; although a stevedore who loses an arm while loading cargo into the same ship, receives a sum of money sufficient, perhaps, to help him start in some small commercial business. The widow of a builder's labourer, whose husband was killed while at work on a building twenty-nine feet high, receives nothing; although the widow of one killed in a similar accident on a building thirty feet high receives not less than three hundred pounds. Gross inequalities such as these are clearly incapable of defence. Further, there is no reason why injuries to life and limb should be compensated, and injuries to health be ignored. The family of a man who has died from lead-poisoning or from anthrax, caused by imperfect arrangements in the workshop, has a precisely equal claim to relief with the family of one who has been killed by the breaking of a chain or the bursting of a boiler, and if such claims were recognized by the law, employers would have an additional motive to make their processes healthy. Lastly, the Accidents Act, owing to the manner of its drafting, has proved a more fruitful source of lawsuits than any other statute passed in recent years; in the words of a distinguished judge, "a scandal of litigation surrounds it." To extend this measure to all trades, and divisions of trades, to consolidate with it the Employers' Liability Act, to include

¹ The workers excluded from the Compensation for Accidents Act are those employed in "workshops" (as technically distinguished from "factories"), seamen and fishermen, shop-assistants, domestic servants, workers in transport (other than railways), casual labourers, and workers on "buildings less than thirty feet high." The total number is about six millions.

within its scope injuries done to health, and to simplify and perfect its provisions, are reforms urgently needed.

Much has been already done, then, to help these various classes of the distressed. The duty of Society is acknowledged; the principles of action are clearly established; practical relief is now being given day by day and year by year; and the work of the reformer is nothing more than to amend, to develop, and to consolidate. When we turn to the question of the unemployed and the question of the aged, the case is different. For the relief of these, little that is satisfactory has yet been achieved in England, and whatever course Parliament may take must be along new paths.

In times of peace the experience of war is forgotten, in times of health a man forgets the pains and dangers of sickness, and in times of good trade the sufferings of the unemployed usually fade from the public mind. But the problem itself does not disappear. To forget it will not prevent its recurrence. Nothing is more certain than that a period of good trade will be followed, sooner or later, by a period of bad trade, and nothing is more probable than that the features of the next time of depression will be similar to those of the last. There will be the same restriction of manufacture, the same dismissal of work-people, the same weary fruitless search for employment, the same extremity of distress, and the same sharp agitation for the provision by public authorities of opportunities for work. And even when trade is normal there is an unemployed problem. The cases are scattered and little is heard of them, but they exist none the less, they cause keen suffering none the less.

We cannot put the problem aside by saying that the unemployed are really the unemployable, that they are out of work through their own bad character or physical unfitness, and that therefore there is no reason why the State should take special action on their behalf. Doubtless this is true of a considerable number; but it is certainly

not true of a number also considerable. For we know that economic causes are at work which cannot fail to throw men idle, and which are wholly beyond their personal control.

A depression of trade, its origins remote and perhaps mysterious, sweeps over the country; a million work-people feel its effects. New forms of labour-saving machinery are continually being invented; useful to all classes in the long run, their first result is to expel many men from the industry to which they belong. A change of fashion may rob large numbers of their employment. Some industries, such as the building trades or those that depend on commerce with ports frozen in winter, vary in activity with the severity of the seasons. Such influences must inevitably affect the labour market. Those who suffer from them are the victims of external forces which they can neither prevent nor escape; they are no more to blame for their misfortunes than a man who has been overwhelmed by an earthquake or paralyzed by a flash of lightning. And the theory that the unemployed are the unemployable, bad characters and bad workmen whom no master will engage, may be finally disproved by one simple fact. Statistics show that each winter over two hundred thousand wage-earners are out of work who had been employed in the previous summer, and that in a year of trade depression over a million are out of work who had been employed in a year of good trade.¹ Plainly it cannot be the

¹ A number of Trade Unions, with a total membership of over half a million, report monthly to the Board of Trade how many of their members are out of work. During the ten years, 1891-1900, the average number unemployed was 3·9 in the month of June and 5·4 in the month of January. (See *The Labour Gazette*, published by the Board of Trade, June 1901.) If the same rate prevails over the whole field of industry—and there is reason to believe that the percentage is larger in the less skilled trades where unionism is weak (see Hobson, *The Problem of the Unemployed*, pp. 17-20)—this would mean that over 200,000 wage-earners who are employed during the summer are out of work during the winter.

In January 1893, the Trade Unions reported 10 per cent. of their members unemployed; in January 1900, only 2·7 per cent. The difference of 7·3 per cent. gives a total of 1,037,184 on the

personal faults of these people which make it impossible for employers to engage them, because, in a different month or year, employers do as a matter of fact engage them.

Nor can we put the question aside by saying that charity and the Poor Law will give the needed relief. Charity is open to the objections already urged, and the receipt of charity is universally held, and soundly held, to be degrading to able-bodied men. To offer the workhouse is to offer to men of good character a system which has been elaborately framed for the punishment of the idle and vicious. The practice once prevailed in England of giving no pension to a soldier wounded in the service of the country, but allowing him to depend for his livelihood on the chance gifts of the benevolent. The Tudor Parliaments, having to deal with numbers of peasants who had been driven from the land by the rise of rents and the laying down of pasture, disposed of the question by ordering them to be branded with a V as vagrants, and to be sentenced to terms of forced labour. To tell the unemployed workman to rely on charity is on a par with the first of these methods. To send him to the Poor Law is little better than the second.

The distress caused by unemployment is chronic ; at times it becomes widespread and acute. It is due, in large measure, to economic causes and not to the misconduct of the persons affected. Existing agencies do not satisfactorily relieve it. These men, able to work and eager to work, but watching in unwilling idleness their savings disappear and their children pinched for want of food ; these men, who are the helpless victims of an industrial system faulty in its working, have a claim on the Society, which maintains and profits by that system, for opportunities to labour. Their demand that the State shall open new avenues of employment when the ordinary ones are closed is clearly a reasonable

aggregate number of 14,280,000 wage-earners (the number given by Sir R. Giffen in his evidence before the Labour Commission in 1893, plus 8 per cent. for increase of population since that date).

demand, and social reformers will fall short of their duty if they fail to seek the needed means of relief.¹

The task is not easy. Many conditions have to be borne in mind. The work to be given must not require special skill, but be suited to all classes of labour. It must not be degrading, like oakum-picking in the work-houses. The goods produced must not compete with domestic products; for if they did, the effect would merely be to injure the trade of private employers and to throw other men out of work. The occupation must be of such a kind that large numbers can be employed at one time and small numbers at another. It must not tempt men away from their usual work, or it will no longer be available for the class intended. And it must not throw an excessive charge on the tax-payer.

Writers on this subject have put forward several schemes which claim to fulfil the conditions. One of these, however, may be summarily dismissed as impracticable.

It is the proposal made by those who, impressed by

¹ Attempts have been made in other countries to deal with the matter by schemes of insurance instead of by the provision of work. In Cologne and in some of the cantons of Switzerland, workmen are invited, or in some cases compelled, to subscribe to certain funds, to which the State also subscribes, and from these funds they draw allowances when out of work. The system, however, does not seem to be successful. It is found that the premiums are a very heavy burden on the poorer classes of labourers, and that in fluctuating trades, where unemployment is frequent, the premiums have to be so large as to lay a most onerous tax on even the better-paid workmen. Besides, the deserving and the undeserving must be equally helped, and a share of the State subsidy goes to the man whose dismissal was due to idleness or incompetence as well as to the man who has been displaced by movements of trade. So far as the case can be met by insurance, the Trade Unions in England partly deal with it. About 700,000 men belong to unions which pay "Out-of-work Benefit" to their members. These, however, form only a small fraction of the wage-earning class. (See the *Report on the Society for Insurance against Want of Employment in Winter at Cologne*, published by the Foreign Office in 1896; Dawson, *Social Switzerland*, p. 166; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, vol. i. p. 160; *Report on Agencies and Methods for Dealing with the Unemployed*, published by the Board of Trade, 1893, p. 18.)

the fact that much land is unused while large quantities of food-stuffs are imported from abroad, consider that the simplest way to deal with the unemployed is to provide them with small areas of land, with stock and with implements, to require them to pay a reasonable rent and to leave them to make their own livelihood. Much has been said in the previous chapter on the advantages of small holdings. But the business of farming, on however modest a scale, is too difficult and complicated to be attempted by the untrained. The experiment has indeed been tried in Holland; there many of the unemployed have been established as peasant-farmers; and after nearly a century's experience of the system, the average loss on each farm, made good from charitable funds, is found to be £23 a year, or about two-thirds of an English labourer's wages.¹ To set briefless barristers or unoccupied journalists to do the work of doctors or engineers is not more unreasonable than to try suddenly to convert into an independent farmer the unemployed artizan or labourer of the town. Besides, a small holding is a permanent occupation. The unemployed need work of only a temporary kind, to enable them to tide over the time until they can be again absorbed into the trade to which they belong.

Similar in aim, but different and more practical in method, is the proposal to establish "Farm Colonies." In some parts of Great Britain and in many parts of the Continent these institutions already exist. In them each man is not required to perform the duties and to run the risks of an independent farmer. They are large tracts of land where the men who apply are set to unskilled labour under expert direction, the more difficult work being done by a small paid staff of experienced farm labourers. The visitor to one of these colonies may watch numbers of men—who would otherwise be tramping the roads, or sitting at home in unproductive idleness—busily engaged in reclaiming soil out of cultivation, in preparing the land for sowing or in reaping

¹ *Report on Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed*, published by the Board of Trade, 1893, p. 316.

the harvest, in all the various occupations of the farm suited to the season ; providing by their labour for a large part of the cost of their maintenance. The labourers being inexperienced, and it being sometimes difficult to obtain a sufficient number of men in the harvest months, there is usually some financial loss, but the loss forms only a small percentage on the amount of relief given. The suggestion is often made that by purchasing, in a large number of districts, land out of cultivation or in bad condition, by drafting unemployed labour to these farms, and by growing on them food-stuffs, part of which the workmen may themselves consume and part be sold in markets now largely provided from abroad, a health-giving, remunerative and not disagreeable form of employment may be offered, in good times and bad, to a number of those who find themselves, through the movements of trade, temporarily idle.¹

Another proposal is the employment of labour in planting and maintaining forests on derelict land. In almost every civilized country except our own, the control of the forests is looked upon as one of the natural functions of the State, and the development of forests as one of the simplest means of adding to the national wealth. In no western European country is there so large a proportion of land uncultivated, and so small a proportion of land under forest, as in the United Kingdom. It is calculated that at least six million acres,

¹ There are twenty-nine farm colonies of this character in Germany, one at La Chalmelle in France, one at Tannenhof in Switzerland, and others at Hadleigh (Essex), Lingfield (Surrey), Chesham (Bucks.), and Dumfries. For descriptions of their operations see Professor Mavor's report on Labour Colonies on the Continent, in the Board of Trade Blue-Book on the Unemployed already quoted ; *Der Wanderer*, the official periodical of the German colonies ; the annual *Rapport au Conseil Municipal de Paris sur la Colonie de La Chalmelle* ; Dawson's *Social Switzerland*, p. 143 ; the annual reports of the Salvation Army ; the reports of the Christian Union for Social Service, to be obtained from the Director of the Colony at Lingfield ; an article by Mr. W. Hazell in the *Reformatory and Refuge Journal*, April 1896 ; and the publications of the Scottish Labour Colony Association, Glasgow.

which are now put to little productive use, are suited for tree planting. At the same time twenty-three million pounds' worth of fir and oak timber are annually imported from abroad, much of which, we have the authority of a Committee of the House of Commons for saying, might profitably be grown at home. If private landowners do not undertake the work, it is because they are faced by many difficulties from which the State would be free. The State can obtain almost unlimited capital at a low rate of interest; it can afford to wait the long period necessary before the expenditure yields a return; operating on a large scale, it could work on a definite and far-reaching plan under the best expert advice; if the planting were undertaken as part of a scheme for dealing with the unemployed, it could command large bodies of labour for the unskilled part of the work at an unusually cheap cost. "When ye hae nothing else to do," said the Laird of Dumbiedikes, in Scott's novel, to his son, "ye may be aye sticking in a tree; it will be growing when ye're sleeping;" and perhaps inquiry will show that the maxim points a road by which our Government also can add to its resources and increase the national prosperity, while partially solving at the same time a difficult social problem.¹

¹ Percentage of total area of land
(a) under forest, (b) uncultivated
(i.e. not under crops, grass
or timber).

Austria	.	.	.	32·6	.	.	.	6·9
Germany	.	.	.	27·2	.	.	.	9·9
Hungary	.	.	.	27·1	.	.	.	10·2
France	.	.	.	17·0	.	.	.	9·0
Belgium	.	.	.	16·8	.	.	.	9·4
Italy	.	.	.	18·1	.	.	.	19·3
Holland	.	.	.	7·2	.	.	.	23·0

Average	.	.	.	20·8	.	.	.	12·5
Great Britain	.	.	.	4·7	.	.	.	28·4
Ireland	.	.	.	1·7	.	.	.	13·4

(See extract from De Foville—*La France Economique* (1890), quoted in Prof. Mayo-Smith's *Statistics and Economics*, p. 117.)

Lastly, it is suggested that local authorities should be more ready in times of distress to carry out public improvements for the sake of giving employment. Already, in a period of trade depression, Borough Councils and Town Councils do sometimes undertake public works of a useful, but not strictly necessary character, in order to provide occupation for those without work. The gradient of hills is reduced, the paving of streets is improved, vacant lands are laid out as gardens. As in India, where the Government has ready

In Germany the State owns or controls two-thirds of the forest lands, and in France 7,400,000 acres. In Austria, Switzerland, Sweden and Russia, the State takes an active and intelligent part in the management of forests. In most of these countries the area of the Government and other forests is being rapidly increased, *e.g.* in France 190,462 acres have been added between 1872 and 1891. (See G. Pinchot, *Government Forestry Abroad*, published by the American Economic Association, 1891.)

The estimate of six million acres of waste land suited for planting is taken from *A Manual of Forestry*, by Dr. Schlich, acknowledged to be one of the most reliable authorities on the subject of afforestation. Dr. Schlich calculates that to plant this area in twenty years would give employment to 15,000 labourers annually, and "after the forests had been created, they would give steady employment to perhaps 100,000 labourers, . . . apart from special forest industries, which the existence of extensive forests tends to create."—(*Manual of Forestry*, vol. i. pp. 61, 65.)

Value of fir and oak timber imported into the United Kingdom in 1900—£23,174,000; of wood-pulp, pitch, resin, and tar—£3,225,000. (Customs House Department, *Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom*, 1901.) The amount of these imports has been very rapidly increasing in recent years.

From the *Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Forestry*, 1887 (pp. iii, iv): "Strong evidence has been given before your Committee that large tracts of land in the United Kingdom . . . might be planted with advantage. . . . It is probable that some considerable proportion of the timber now imported, to the value of £16,000,000, might under more skilful management be raised at home." For the large profits that may be made from land under forests, see *The Woods of the Novar Estate*, by Lieut.-Col. F. Bailey, published by the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society, 1900.

A large part of the work of planting, cutting and carrying timber can be carried on at any time in the year. (Cf. Schlich, i. 25.)

in the pigeon-holes of its offices plans for works which may serve to employ the people whenever the failure of rain brings famine, so our public authorities may be required to have in reserve schemes of desirable improvements which should be put into operation whenever a slackened demand for labour brings distress.¹

Along such lines, it is suggested, the St  te may be able to solve, not indeed the whole, but at least a large part of this difficult problem.

The labour required on the farm colonies, in the forest establishments, and on the special public works, would be unskilled and suited to workmen of every trade. It would not be thought degrading, except by the highest classes of artisans, and these seldom seek public relief in times of unemployment. The goods produced would not compete with domestic products. Large numbers of labourers could be employed at one time and small numbers at another. If low wages were paid, the men would not be attracted from their usual trades so long as work could be obtained in them. And it is difficult to suggest any cheaper form of relief.

That public works would not be remunerative is certain; that farm colonies would not be remunerative is probable; that forests, if largely worked with untrained labour, would not be remunerative is very possible; but this is a case where expenditure would be a saving. The idleness of these men is already a charge on the wealth of the community, whether they be supported from the rates, from the funds of the trade

¹ The Royal Commission on Labour reported: "In periods of commercial depression there is always a demand that public authorities should undertake new works, whether remunerative or not. And though it is doubtless true that the community may well afford to suffer some material loss, rather than allow large numbers of the working-classes to suffer the hardship and the deterioration caused by long periods of enforced idleness, yet the plan of starting new works in a hurry for the purpose must be regarded with some anxiety on account of its wastefulness and other evils. But we think that, with a little forethought, public authorities might during more prosperous times prepare plans for works that are needed but not urgent, and hold them in readiness for times of depression."—*Majority Report*, p. 103.

unions, or from that part of the national wealth which forms their own savings. If their maintenance cost, say, ten shillings a week per head, it is better to set them to work and give them the ten shillings, even though the work they do is worth no more than seven or eight, than to leave them idle and producers of nothing. A loss of two shillings, on balance, to the State is better than a loss of ten shillings to the individuals who form the State. And their idleness involves cost other than financial. There is the deterioration of character to be taken into account. No man can be the same as he was before, after he has passed through a long period of worklessness, destitution and despair; and if the State were able, by some expenditure of money, to prevent the degradation of a considerable number of its members, it would be a very short-sighted thriftiness that would refuse a subsidy. The relief given would not go to the idle and drunken, for the hard work required would exclude them; and if the labour test did not keep them away, their character would soon be detected and they would be dismissed to seek the stern hospitality of the workhouse.¹

In other directions something may perhaps be done to prevent, as apart from the efforts to cure, the evils of unemployment. In some of the industries now considered seasonal, steps may be taken by Government departments, by municipalities and by private individuals employing labour, to distribute the work more

¹ In Belgium, in Holland and in Switzerland, the deliberate idlers, instead of being allowed to become a burden in the workhouses to the rate-payer, or in the prisons to the tax-payer, are sentenced by judicial process to terms of forced labour on farms set aside for the purpose, and are there required to help in producing the means for their own maintenance. The workmen's representatives on the Labour Commission did not hesitate to recommend for this class "the establishment of experimental labour colonies, under strict government, to which any man might be committed for a fixed term, to undergo the course of mental and technical educational discipline most calculated to restore him to the ranks of the workers."—See Prof. Mavor's *Report*, already quoted; Dawson's *Social Switzerland*, p. 223; *The Minority Report of the Labour Commission*, p. 142.

evenly over the year; public opinion taught to understand the disastrous effects of sudden changes in the fashions, may succeed in time in checking their vagaries; and the wider the area of foreign commerce is extended, the less will be the risk of a general depression of trade.

Something also may be done to help the disengaged workman in his search for a vacancy in private establishments. Trade Unions collect information for their members, but Trade Unions include only a fraction of the working-classes; advertisements in newspapers are a very uncertain method, and prove almost useless for unskilled labourers; a notice that hands are wanted, posted outside the gates of the factory or workshop, may, or may not be seen by suitable applicants; and too often there is a long weary wandering from yard to yard and from town to town in undirected search for possible vacancies—fruitless wanderings that involve for the worker, not only a considerable expense in money, but a protracted feeling of despondency, the memory of which, as many have testified, never fades from the mind. For masters and men to be content with such crude methods of communication is like a nation being content to carry on its correspondence by means of occasional messengers and private dépôts without the help of a Post Office.

Here again foreign experience helps to point a better road. In France a number of municipalities have established Labour Registries, where workmen seeking a situation, and employers seeking workmen, may apply, and through which they may be brought into communication. In Switzerland and in seven of the States of the American Union, in New Zealand, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, there are similar institutions. Experiments on these lines have also been made in England, with considerable success, by some of the London Borough Councils and by a few private individuals.¹ It has been proposed that the British Govern-

¹ See the *Board of Trade Report on the Unemployed*; Dawson's *Social Switzerland*, p. 154; *A Monograph on Employment Bureaus*, published by the United States Commission to the Paris Exhibition of 1900; and the *Labour Gazette*.

ment should establish a complete system of Labour Registries of this kind, in connection, perhaps, with the Post Offices ; a simple piece of social machinery, which, if widely used, would give the workman immediate news of the existence of vacancies in his trade, either in his own district, in another part of his town, or in some different locality ; and when no vacancies were open, he would at least be made aware of the fact and be saved the toil and expense of a useless and distant search.¹

Such, then, are the chief practical measures which those who have made a detailed study of the problem suggest. It cannot be said that at this moment they, or any of them, form part of the adopted programme of the Liberal party. But when the question emerges from the preliminary stage of discussion and practical steps towards a solution come to be taken, it must necessarily be among proposals such as these that a Liberal Government will find its policy, and it is for this reason that they are included here.

So far with regard to the unemployed. We turn to the last of our categories of the distressed, to the case of the aged poor.

Of the whole British population above the age of sixty-five no fewer than thirty per cent. are in the work-house or receiving out-door relief. Among the working-classes above that age the proportion of paupers is forty per cent. Among the unskilled labourers and women

¹ Germany and Switzerland have gone still further. Lodging-houses are maintained in a large number of towns, where the *bonâ fide* workman travelling in search of work may obtain a night's lodging and food. If he has no money, he can pay his moderate bill by a few hours' work at wood-chopping or some similar employment. Registries of vacant situations in the town are kept by the managers. In some of the Swiss cantons the system is entirely maintained by the State ; elsewhere it is usually subsidized by voluntary funds. The plan compares favourably with its English prototype, the casual ward. (See the publications of the Deutschen Herbergverein, to be obtained from *Die Schriften*, Niederlage Bethel in Gadderbaum bei Bielefeld ; also Dawson, p. 131.)

workers the proportion is sixty per cent.¹ These percentages cover a total of six hundred thousand persons.² And in addition, there is the great unnumbered multitude of aged people who just succeed by strenuous effort in keeping free from parish relief, who are superior to the others only in independence, but are their equals in penury and distress. Could we only see in one comprehensive view all these lonely old men and women, living in their garrets or their bare cottages, striving to subsist on the few weekly shillings given by the Guardians or drawn from their own savings; could we watch them day by day, badly-clothed, ill-fed, unprovided with comforts, contriving as best they can to make their pauper's pence last out the week, or harassed by the thought that it may be their savings and not their life which will be the first to come to an end—no one of us could fail to be moved by the sadness of such extreme and hopeless distress. The "old age beautiful and free," which men are told to expect as the crown of their labours, is seldom the lot of the poor.

Deeply pathetic as are these conditions, there would yet be little reason for State interference if they were the fault of the sufferers themselves. A man who sows drunkenness and vice will reap poverty, and Government is not called upon to tax the better members of society in order to subsidize the bad. But there is no reason to believe that the majority of the aged poor are undeserving. The drunken and the dissolute seldom live to advanced years. If they do, they find their way to the Poor Law long before they reach old age, but the proportion of the aged who receive relief from the rates is ten times as great as the proportion of the able-bodied.³ No sweeping accusations of idleness and

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, 1895, pp. xiv and xcii; Mr. Charles Booth's evidence before the Commission, 10,859.

² *Report of the Committee on Old Age Pensions* (appointed by the Treasury in 1898, and presided over by Lord Rothschild—the "Rothschild Committee"), p. 12.

³ Between the ages of 16 and 59 three per cent. of the population receive Poor Law relief. Between the ages of 70 and 75 the

unthriftiness are needed to account for the destitution of the aged. The low wages of large classes of the people, the heavy charges they have to bear in rearing families, in providing against sickness, in insuring for burial and in meeting periods of unemployment, fully account for the failure to put by a subsistence for their declining years; and the Committees and Commissions which have examined the question emphatically declare that we cannot dismiss the problem by saying that it exists through the faults, and not through the poverty, of the poor.¹

Will it disappear of itself as the result of the rise during recent years in the rates of wages? It can hardly be expected. The wages of many classes of workers, especially of women-workers, are still at a minimum. The increase of rents in towns is a large item on the other side of the account. And now-a-days, more than ever before, the years between fifty and sixty-five draw on the earlier savings. Modern industrial methods put a greater strain on the worker; the Compensation for Accidents Act renders employers unwilling to keep workmen who are slow in hearing, in sight, or in movement; men and women who are past the highest standard of efficiency, find themselves elbowed aside by the competition of

proportion is thirty-one per cent. Mr. Charles Booth, *The Aged Poor: Condition*, p. 42; cf. *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, p. xiii.

¹ The Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1899 to consider the question of Old Age Pensions, declared in their report, "We are unable to ignore the fact, abundantly supported as it is by the evidence we have had before us, that cases are too often to be found in which poor and aged people, whose conduct and whose whole career has been blameless, industrious and deserving, find themselves from no fault of their own, at the end of a long and meritorious life, with nothing but the workhouse or inadequate out-door relief, as the refuge for their declining years" (p. iv).

Compare the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, p. xv: "The statement that pauperism is largely due to drink, idleness, improvidence and the like causes . . . applies to but a very small proportion of the working-class population." See also *Ibid.*, p. xciii.

younger people ; their employment is irregular and their wages low ; and during these difficult years the savings, which better conditions may have enabled the workers to accumulate during their prime, often melt away.

Can we leave the care of the aged to the kindness of their children ? The plan is excessively cruel to the childless. It often presses hardly on the children, who, poor themselves and with families of their own to maintain, are required to bear the additional burden of supporting their aged parents. And the figures of pauperism are there to show that this resource does not, as a matter of fact, meet the need.

Or should we, again, refuse the demand for Old Age Pensions on the ground that thrift would be undermined ? Surely it would rather be promoted. The sum usually proposed to be given is hardly enough for a maintenance ; it is more likely to be a nucleus than a substitute for savings. Many a man with low wages is now careless of saving because he knows that, though he may stint himself of enjoyment, he can never accumulate enough to keep him from the Poor Law if he lives to be old ; were he sure of a small pension to provide him with bare necessities he would have a strong inducement to lay by a shilling here and a pound there to add, when the time came, some welcome comforts ; and the proposal is advocated on this very ground among others, that it would promote thrift by removing that feeling of despair which is thrift's greatest enemy.

Lastly, can we say that the aged poor may be entitled to sympathy, but have no right to demand financial relief beyond that now given by the Poor Law ? These old men and women are equally members of the State with the rest. If their character has been good, they may claim, as members of the State, the right, so long as they live, to the means of living worthily. They have served the nation at large by their long years of useful labour, and their services give them a title to the nation's gratitude. Whatever other claimants for relief may be denied, the old, who have been in earlier years too ill-paid to allow them to save, cannot justly be denied.

The arguments in favour of some system of State relief to the aged, more generous and less degrading than that now established by the Poor Law, are held by most Liberals to outweigh by far the arguments against it. But it is impossible to ignore the fact that every plan yet proposed is open to grave objections.

To any one who approaches the question of Old Age Pensions for the first time, nothing appears more simple. Parliament has only to decide in favour of the principle, to fix the amount of the pension, the age at which it is to be given, and the classes who are to receive it, it will then vote the necessary money, and the matter is settled.

But when he examines the problem a little more closely he finds that several difficult points present themselves. He finds in the first place that he must decide whether the persons who will receive the pensions are to contribute towards the cost of them or not.

If they are to contribute, the payments must be either compulsory, as in Germany, or voluntary. Our inquirer is inclined, perhaps, to favour a compulsory scheme. But he would soon discover that a compulsory scheme would be highly unpopular. Working-men who are able to lay by a few pence each week often prefer to use the money in the gradual purchase of a cottage, in providing capital with which to start later on a little business, or in accumulating a fund to apprentice their children. They say that they object to employ their savings in a way that would be useless to them if they died before they reached old age, and which in any case would be useless to their families. They would regard it as a tyrannous action for the State to seize a part of their wages against their will, and so debar them from the forms of thrift which they prefer. He would discover that a compulsory scheme could probably not be carried, and he is brought to the conclusion that if the pensioners are to contribute at all it must be of their own free will.

But he is at once told that a voluntary scheme of this kind would certainly fail to achieve its object. For the

reason already given, many of the better-paid workmen would refuse to join, and would still refuse even though the State gave large subsidies from the taxes to the pension fund. The pensions would simply be deferred annuities, and deferred annuities are unpopular among the working-classes, as they are unpopular among all sections of the community.¹ And if the better-paid workmen would be unwilling to contribute, many of the worse-paid would be unable as well as unwilling; for the weekly payments needed to secure pensions for themselves and their wives would often lay too heavy a tax on their small wages. Further, under a system of this kind, the pensions could not begin to be paid until the contributions had accumulated; the period that must elapse is usually fixed at forty years; only those who are now young could ultimately benefit, and during the long interval the problem, urgent as it is, would be left altogether untouched. He would realize that a scheme which would not operate at all for forty years after Parliament had sanctioned it, and which would then reach only a fraction of the working-classes, and that the portion best able to provide for itself,² would not be likely to arouse enthusiasm or command support. So the inquirer is probably led to say that a system of pensions without contributions is more likely to be successful.

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, p. lxvi.

"The disinclination of the working-class to deferred annuities seems based on the better side of human nature. The best men will always prefer to provide for their wives or for their children rather than for themselves. An elaborate scheme for bribing the working-classes to insure against their old age, in preference to other forms of saving, is in reality a scheme for nurturing the egoistic and restraining the altruistic qualities of mankind."—*Sir Spencer Walpole's Memorandum in the Report of the Rothschild Committee*, p. 21.

² Mr. Chamberlain has said of his own scheme, which was based on the principle of voluntary contributions: "I am not sanguine enough to suppose that even one-tenth of the working-classes would in the first instance accept this offer; and if one-tenth applied, I should say it was rather the upper one-tenth than the lower one-tenth."—(Quoted in the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, p. lxxviii.)

In that case he is faced by another problem. Are the pensions to be given to all who reach a certain age or only to selected classes? He would naturally say that they should only be given to those who are both poor and of good character. The rich do not need them, and the bad do not deserve them. But how are we to define the poor? He would doubtless fix a limit of income, say, ten shillings a week, as the Committee of the House of Commons on Old Age Pensions suggested; and those who had more than ten shillings a week would be held not to need a pension. To this plan, however, two objections present themselves. How is it possible to ascertain what a man's income really is if he has an interest in concealing it? Already the Boards of Guardians confess that they are unable to find out whether the people who apply to them for out-door relief have independent means or not.¹ And in the second place, is it just or expedient to tell the working-classes that if they wish for a State pension they must be careful not to save beyond a certain figure? One man receiving high wages is wasteful with his money; another, receiving lower wages, is frugal; the one in his old age has nothing, the other has enough for a bare subsistence; it would hardly be fair for the State to tax the earnings of both, but to assist out of the proceeds only the one who had been improvident.

The deserving are to be relieved. But how, again, can we distinguish the deserving? It has been suggested that membership in a Friendly Society should be taken as the test. Such a qualification, however, would exclude practically all the women, who are the most numerous, the most helpless, and perhaps the most deserving among the aged poor; for very few women belong to Friendly Societies. In Ireland and in some parts of Scotland and Wales, where Friendly Societies have taken little hold,² almost all the men would be excluded also. And people who in their youth had lived in districts where no Court

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, pp. xx, xxi.

² *Report of the Rothschild Committee*, p. 6; Lubbock, *Some Poor Relief Questions*, pp. 267-8.

or Lodge had been established, or who had been refused admission into a society on account of chronic ill-health, would be most unjustly denied the benefit. As an alternative test it has been suggested that all who had kept free from Poor Law relief for ten, or for twenty years prior to the pension age should be taken to be the deserving. But this would include men of low character who had nevertheless been able to earn high wages through skilfulness in their trade; it would refuse pensions to men of good character who had been forced by ill-health or other misfortune during the difficult years between fifty and sixty-five (or whatever may be fixed as the pension age) to ask help from the rates in order to escape starvation. There is no test which will separate, with any approach to justice, the good from the bad, no automatic balance, like the scales at the mint, which will weigh men and women as coins, pass those which are up to the standard and reject those that fall short. If the deserving are to be selected, the only method would be a separate inquiry into the case of each applicant.

But when the investigator is about to decide that the plan of separate inquiry would be the best, he will find that here also serious objections arise. Inquiries of this kind may be practicable as part of the pension system of a country like New Zealand, where the population is small and comparatively stable, and each man is well known to his neighbours; among the vast migratory classes of artizans and labourers in the great towns of the United Kingdom they would clearly be fraught with great difficulties, and liable to result in serious inequality and injustice. Further, if some local authority is to grant a weekly dole from the State to a selected class of the poor after an inquisition into their character, it is difficult to see how this will differ, except perhaps in the amount of the gift, from the present system of outdoor relief.

The seeker for a satisfactory scheme is, therefore, led to the only remaining proposal—that identified with the name of Mr. Charles Booth—the grant of free pensions

to all the aged without distinction of any kind. The plan is not open to the objection that it would help the undeserving while omitting the deserving; it would stigmatize none as paupers, since all would share alike; it is free, indeed, from all the drawbacks which attach to the other schemes. But it would be exceedingly costly. Even if the pensions were fixed so low as five shillings a week, and the pension age so high as sixty-five, no less a sum than twenty-four millions a year would be needed.¹ It is true that some two millions would be saved on the Poor Rate,² and that another million could be obtained from existing endowments devoted to the relief of the old.³ The fact remains that the need of raising an additional revenue of over twenty millions is no small obstacle to the adoption of the scheme.

At the end he would have to confess that the problem, so far from being simple, is among the hardest that statesmen can be called upon to solve. Each plan in turn is open to valid objections. Whatever course is taken must needs be a choice between evils. There is as yet no agreement among Liberals as to which solution presents the fewest difficulties. Some favour the plan of universal pensions in spite of its costliness, and urge that an effort should be made to provide the revenue needed. Some favour the plan of selecting, by means of inquiries, the needy and the deserving, in spite of the risk of discouraging thrift, and in spite of the imperfections that must attach to this method. And some hold that we can do no more than reform the Poor Law, give out-door relief to the aged on a scale more generous than the present, and provide almshouses, in place of the workhouses, for those whose infirmities and loneliness make it impossible for them to live independently. Only when the controversy on this point is settled and a definite plan of procedure chosen, will it be

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor*, p. lxix; Mr. Charles Booth, *Old Age Pensions and the Aged Poor*, p. 53.

² *Report of the Royal Commission*, p. lxix.

³ *Report of the House of Commons Committee*, p. vii.

possible to include a proposal of Old Age Pensions as part of the Liberal programme. To do so earlier would be to raise hopes that may not be satisfied, to give a pledge without clear knowledge of the right means of fulfilment.

CHAPTER VII

STATE INDUSTRIES: LIBERALISM AND SOCIALISM

FOR the State itself to conduct certain industries is another of the means on which Liberals rely to bring progress.

State trading has many advantages. When the community manages a business, the community as a whole reaps the profits of the business. The Post Office, for example, brings a net return of four million pounds a year to the national purse, and the chief municipal enterprises—in gas, water, electricity, tramways and harbours—nearly an equal sum to the local revenues.¹ Secondly, when the capital needed is borrowed on the public credit, it can be raised at a cheap rate of interest, and in consequence the goods or services can be supplied at a reduced charge. Thirdly, if the industry be a monopoly—and certain industries, such as the supply of gas, water and tramway traction, can hardly fail to become monopolies—the State, by assuming the management, is able to protect the public, in the only way which experience shows to be permanently satisfactory, against the inadequate services which monopolies usually give, and the exorbitant charges which monopolies often exact.

¹ See a Return of the Local Government Board—*Municipal Corporations (Reproductive Undertakings)*, 1899. The figures there given include only the profits of Town Councils in England and Wales. Those of the London County Council, of the London Borough Councils, of Urban District Councils, and of all local bodies in Scotland and Ireland must be added. We cannot enter here into the controversy whether or not public bodies should supply their goods and services at cost price, and no profit be earned for the benefit of the public revenue.

Lastly, only when the State is itself the employer can it have complete control over all the conditions of employment; only then can it carry out to the full one of its primary objects and secure that just terms, in every particular, be given to the work-people. It is not strange that a system which benefits the tax-payer and the rate-payer by increasing the public revenues, the consumer by giving him lower prices and better services, and the workman by improving the conditions of his employment, should be highly popular and should rapidly expand.

Fifty years ago only twenty towns had municipalized one or more of the gas, water, electricity, tramway and harbour industries. Now over two hundred have done so.¹ The Post Office has largely developed its work, has absorbed the telegraphs and, to a large extent, the business of carrying parcels. The Admiralty and the War Office have great industrial establishments of their own. It may be estimated, indeed, that over half a million of the population are wage-earners regularly employed by the Government or by local authorities.² The State, which was formerly a ruler and protector and nothing more, has become within recent years the greatest of British manufacturers and the busiest of British merchants. Each of its citizens, by virtue of his citizenship, is a shareholder in the vastest and most varied of industrial undertakings. The process is likely to continue. The benefits of State trading are likely to be reaped in a constantly growing number of localities, and from a constantly growing variety of industries.

Attempts are sometimes made to lay down a definite line beyond which, it is said, State trading should not be allowed to pass. Some politicians suggest that the State may take over with advantage all industries which are monopolies, and no industries which are not monopolies. But ship-building, for example, house-building, the carriage of parcels, are not by nature monopolies; yet

¹ See the return already quoted.

² One hundred and sixty thousand persons are engaged in the Post Office alone. Mr. Sidney Webb calculates that over four hundred thousand more are employed in other public industries.

we do not condemn the existence of Admiralty dock-yards, of a Works Department of the London County Council, or a Parcels Department of the Post Office. Railway nationalization is often advocated on the very ground that the competition between the companies is wasteful, and that the industry should rightly be a monopoly; whatever the drawbacks of railway nationalization on other grounds, the proposal clearly cannot be ruled out of court on a general plea that only trades which are already monopolies are fit subjects for national or municipal management. Other suggestions of definite boundaries equally fail under the test of practical instances. Adam Smith tried to draw a distinction of principle between those trades that could be carried on by Joint Stock Companies and those that must be left to individual management; experience has shown that no such line can be drawn in practice; and those modern economists seem well advised who make no attempt to imitate his example and propose no theoretic divisions between the spheres of State and of private industrial enterprise.

Yet limits to State trading, vague and empirical it not formal and definite, there undoubtedly are, and Liberals do not advocate an indiscriminate application of the practice. If State trading is attended by large advantages, carried beyond a certain point it is attended by serious dangers.

Enterprise, inventiveness, readiness to welcome improvements are essential to success and progress in industry; they are qualities which public authorities playing the part of manufacturers may be found to lack. Risk-taking is necessary, and they are averse to speculation. The hope of personal gain and the fear of personal loss are strong incentives to efficiency in the conduct of business; public spirit may not prove a sufficient substitute for them. There is always the danger of corruption. There is the danger that the workmen through their votes may control the authorities that employ them, and use their power, not merely to obtain the terms to which they are justly entitled, but

to exact privileges and subsidies for themselves at the expense of the tax-payers or rate-payers at large. And the duties that fall upon the public men in any town are already heavy. They have to manage education. They have to carry out the Poor Law. They are charged with the administration of Acts of Parliament dealing with a score of varied subjects. The number of men who are suited to serve on the various authorities of their town is not unlimited. If the care of too many industries be thrown upon them, their energies may be dissipated, they may fail in the duties with which they are already charged, and, unable to keep a constant watch on the new departments, corruption may creep in, the management become routine, and the municipal industries be marked by a low standard of enterprise and efficiency.

State trading has so far, indeed, been almost uniformly successful. But the industries which have been undertaken are few and simple. Because a Government department carries on the Post Office in the main with success, it does not follow that a Government department would carry on the shipping trade, for instance, with success. Because Town Councils manufacture gas satisfactorily, it does not follow that they would manufacture cotton goods satisfactorily. And the fact that local authorities, conducting the three or four services which are now usually municipalized, are able to guard against inefficiency, corruption and the undue pressure of employees, and are able as well to give proper attention to their other duties, does not prove that they could conduct without disaster a dozen or a hundred businesses; any more than the fact that an orchard nourishes a hundred trees proves that it could nourish a thousand. Therefore Liberals hold that the State must be cautious in taking up industrial functions, and must be well assured that the Government departments and local authorities are likely to be fully competent for the task before charging them with additional duties of this nature.

But they say that the cases are very rare in which

large towns cannot safely put under public control the supply of gas, water, electricity and tramway traction. They urge that the advantages of so doing to the rate-payers, the consumers and the work-people are so large that the step should be taken whenever overwhelming reasons to the contrary do not appear. They deny that State trading need be limited to what have been called the "natural monopolies"; but they consider that the road is too obscure to permit a definite statement of the right point to which the process may be carried. Experiments are needed, and local authorities should be encouraged to make experiments when the municipalization of some new industry seems likely to be successful. Each case must be judged on its own merits, and in the specific proposals of the nationalization of railways and of canals they seek further information and await further discussion before pledging themselves to legislative action.

It is their tentative, cautious conclusion in this matter which chiefly separates the Liberals from the Socialists.

For Socialism in its modern form is no revolutionary scheme for the sudden and equal division of existing wealth among the industrious classes. It is no more than a proposal, claiming to be evolutionary, for the rapid extension of this principle of State trading; but an extension ignoring the conditions which Liberals hold to be necessary, and denying the dangers which Liberals hold to be real.

To the Socialist the road is not obscure. Without any misgivings he would nationalize and municipalize all industries as fast as the consent of the nation could be gained. Deeply impressed by the advantages of State trading, he would have the community reap them, not from a part, but from the whole field of industry. The State should be the sole capitalist; through its own officials it should conduct every process of agriculture, manufacture, locomotion and sale; the whole population should be its employees. Then the nation would save

all the expenses of rent and interest and all the waste that comes from competition; the whole product of labour would go to the workers with brain or with hand; employment would be methodically arranged so as to avoid all under-pay, all over-work and all idleness, whether willing or unwilling. Such is the economic creed which, with an enthusiasm that rivals the fervour of a new religion, has been preached, and is still being preached, in all countries by devoted disciples.

Complete individualism was once the doctrine of the idealists, and a writer like Godwin saw the salvation of mankind in the annihilation of government and the unfettered development of private energies. Complete collectivism is now the panacea, Karl Marx the prophet and the Socialist groups the chosen instruments. Once more we have the incident in *Hudibras* when

“Politicians

T’ Apollo offer’d up petitions,
For licensing a new invention
They had found out of an antique engine,
To root all the weeds that grow
In public gardens, at a blow,
And leave th’ herbs standing. Quoth Sir Sun,
‘My friends, that is not to be done.’”

Before they accept the Socialist plan Liberals need to be assured that the better distribution of wealth which it promises will not be outweighed by a lessened production. A large national income unequally, even unfairly, divided may be better for every class concerned than a small national income distributed on the most exact rules of justice. The dangers of industrial stagnation, of inefficiency and of corruption make us cautious even of small extensions of State trading. When it is proposed to extend it over the whole area of production and distribution they become infinitely more formidable and seem to present insuperable obstacles.

The success of the industries now under public control, the Post Office and the rest, would be more than ever an unreliable precedent. Those industries have been originated and fostered in the world of private

competitive industry ; most of them are managed by officials who have been trained in that system ; their progress is stimulated by comparison with similar industries privately conducted ; the Ministers, Town Councillors and other representatives who supervise them are, or have been, often themselves engaged in private business. But in a collectivist State all this would be absent. There would be no competitive industries from whose methods the State could learn and from whose inventions it could profit, nor would there be any supervising class other than the class of officials. This forms a fundamental difference.

And before they accept the Socialist plan Liberals ask by what rule it would fix salaries and wages. The law of demand and supply is, we are told, to be discarded as anti-social. Is each worker, then, to receive an equal wage—the judge the same as the labourer, the workman who has learnt a skilled trade the same as one who has not troubled to add in this way to his value to society ? Or is the State to fix an arbitrary tariff of pay for every occupation, and if so, how could it maintain its tariff against the protests of organized classes who would each be constantly using its political power to improve its economic position ?

Much has been said, in addition, for and against the views that a Socialist state must from its very nature suppress all liberty and self-reliance, and that by destroying the leisured class it would deeply injure art, science and literature. And much controversy has turned on the question whether the forces of reform in this country could ever succeed in wresting all land and capital from private ownership and transferring it to public authorities. But until the problems are decided how industrial efficiency and progress can be maintained and on what principle the rewards of labour will be fixed, it is hardly necessary to consider in detail the other aspects of the question. For examine these two questions more closely and they will be seen to present fatal dilemmas. The Socialist literature may be searched and many suggested solutions will be found ; but most

of them are mutually contradictory, and none of them carry conviction of their justice and practicability.

To say, as many Socialists now say, that during the progress towards collectivism these problems will gradually find their answers, will not satisfy the practical politician. Innovators must bring proofs, and such prophecy is not proof.

Larger benefits to the people are promised indeed by Socialism than any which Liberalism can offer. So alchemy, it was thought, would make men richer than chemistry. El Dorado would have been a possession more valuable than Australia. But chemistry is a science and alchemy is not. Australia exists and El Dorado was a figment.

The Liberal shares with the Socialist, then, a deep indignation at the economic evils that exist. He is willing to join with him in securing vigorous action by the State for their cure. He agrees that State trading may often prove a powerful means of remedy. But he is very sceptical whether a complete substitution of State industry for private industry would not make matters far worse than they are; he refuses to accept with easy optimism a doubtful and undeveloped scheme of fundamental change; he refuses to set out on a toilsome march towards a promised city whose gorgeous architecture and beautiful gardens may prove to be no more substantial than a visionary mirage in the midst of a desert.

CHAPTER VIII

TRADE

LIBERALISM has always had its commercial side. To encourage the work of the manufacturer and the merchant was one of the chief objects of the eighteenth-century Whigs. The Philosophic Radicals carried on the tradition. The Manchester School was nothing if not commercial. And the Liberals of to-day attach the highest importance to the development of trade. For unless the commercial classes succeed in their operations, the country as a whole will not be prosperous; unless the nation becomes more wealthy, the standard of comfort of the working-classes can rise but little; unless the revenue expands, many of the social reforms that need expenditure cannot be carried into effect. To encourage trade is one of the surest means of attacking poverty. Moreover, Liberals are not as the sect of Ebionites who held that the poor alone may be saved. The manufacturer and the merchant are equally members of the State; they are entitled for their own sakes to a share of its favours; and a progressive policy must needs be in part a commercial policy, as well in order to benefit directly this important section of the community as in order to benefit through them the community as a whole. The measures that may be adopted to this end form a very varied list.

[The state may help the trader by opening new countries as markets for his exports. To send a Minister or Resident to a semi-civilized kingdom is to send a commercial traveller on behalf of the nation; to maintain throughout the world the prestige of the British

name is to establish a system of insurance for British goods; and to annex territory is to open shops. But the annexation of territory is a question that depends, of course, on wider issues than issues only of trade. How far such a policy can be justified morally, and how far it is expedient to carry it, are questions which cannot be discussed on commercial grounds alone, which only a nation truly of shopkeepers would wish to discuss on such grounds alone. In any statement of Liberal policy they must be given a separate and detailed treatment.¹

Less controversial is the proposal to 'stimulate to greater activity the consular service, the Board of Trade, all the agencies of the State for supplying the merchants at home with business information from abroad. There is little doubt that these agencies could be made far more helpful than they now are. There is little doubt, especially, that the British consular service is in many respects less useful to British trade than the German service to German trade. Nowhere is "the policy of national efficiency," for which Lord Rosebery pleads, more needed, and in few departments is it likely to bear more valuable fruit.

A further means by which the State may encourage foreign commerce is to secure a free inflow and outflow of goods unhindered by customs tariffs.

The adoption of Free Trade has brought great benefits in its train. Since the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, soon followed by the abolition of every vestige of Protection, the population of the United Kingdom has grown by fifty per cent., but its exports and imports have grown by more than five hundred per cent. This vast development of foreign trade has added immensely to the wealth of the nation. In the same period, the incomes assessed to income-tax have increased threefold, the deposits in the Savings Banks have increased sixfold, and—an excellent test of the condition of the people—the con-

¹ See later the chapters on Imperialism.

sumption of tea and sugar has increased, per head of the population, threefold and fourfold.¹ An ancient sage said that there were two things over which the gods themselves had no control, past events and arithmetic. Past events and arithmetic show beyond power of dispute that the Free Trade policy has been justified by its results. England, which before 1846 was in the depths of economic depression—wages low, comforts few, pauperism widespread—has risen to a height of prosperity marvellous in comparison. Of all the boons that a nation has received from the hands of a party, Liberals have a right to claim that few have wrought a larger and more rapid improvement in the condition of a people than the repeal by the British Parliament, at the bidding of Cobden and his supporters, of the earlier system of tariffs and exclusion.

Yet, in spite of these facts, signs may be seen that the old weeds of Protection, cut down with so much labour half a century ago, are again beginning to show their heads, and the Liberals of this generation have still to be on the alert in order to hold the ground which their predecessors reclaimed. Before proceeding to other subjects we are obliged therefore to pause for a moment and to outline the answers which Liberals offer to the arguments urged by the opponents of Free Trade.

“Our markets are flooded with foreign goods. Our bread is made from American wheat, and half the things

¹ Population . .	1846	28,000,000	1901 . .	41,000,000
Exports . . .	1846	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{under} \\ \pounds 68,000,000 \\ \pounds 85,000,000 \\ (\text{estimated}) \end{array} \right\}$	1900 . .	£354,000,000
Imports . . .	1846		1900 . .	£523,000,000
Assessments to				
Income-tax . .	1846	£253,000,000	1899-1900	£788,000,000
Deposits in . .				
Savings Banks	1846	£31,000,000	1899 . .	£181,000,000
Consumption of				
tea per head of				
population . .	1846	17 lbs.	1898 . .	59 lbs.
Consumption of				
sugar . . .	1846	21 lbs.	1898 . .	85½ lbs.

we buy are 'made in Germany.' We import things instead of producing them at home ; we send our money abroad instead of using it to give work to our own people ; the result is that British working-men are unemployed and the country is less prosperous than it might be. Surely it is common-sense that we ought to establish a customs tariff and keep our own markets for our own people."

But if the foreigner "floods our markets" we flood the foreigner's markets in an equal degree. With certain exceptions which we shall consider later, for every pound's worth of goods that we import, a pound's worth of goods is exported in exchange. You notice in the shops the American flour, the German hardware, the French silks, the Swedish matches, but you do not go to the wharves of Liverpool and see the great parcels of cotton-goods that are sent to America in payment, to the factories of the West Riding and see the cloth being made which the Germans and the Swedes will buy, to the mines of Northumberland and watch the coal being hewn that will be burnt in the furnaces of Paris or Lille. If we, by purchasing foreign goods, employ foreign workmen, other countries, by purchasing our goods, employ our workmen to the same extent. And they cannot buy from us unless they are able to sell to us. For commerce is exchange, and to stop imports coming in is to stop exports going out. In the complicated, and sometimes abstruse, controversy on Free Trade and Protection this is the central fact which must never be lost to view.¹

"But as a matter of fact our exports do not balance our imports. The figures of national trade are printed every month in the newspapers, and they always show that the imports are much greater than the exports.

¹ It is often supposed that German goods in particular are now "invading our markets" to a greater extent than our goods are sent to Germany. The statistics, however, show that the opposite is the case. In the five years 1895 to 1899, the annual value of German exports to the United Kingdom increased by £3,130,000, but the value of British exports to Germany increased by £5,410,000. —(*Statesman's Year Book*, 1901, p. 641.)

Consequently, we must be paying the balance in gold and be constantly growing poorer."

The Board of Trade figures, Free Traders point out, are unable to take into account many important particulars. In the first place, English ships carry nearly one-half of the sea-borne commerce of the world. They are continually at work earning freightage from other countries. A British ship carries a cargo of goods worth, let us say, £70,000 from Liverpool to the United States, and the sum charged for this service is perhaps £2,000. But the American merchant does not send over this £2,000 for freightage, any more than the £70,000 for the goods, in actual coin. Foreign exchange is not conducted in that way. The payments are made by a draft on an American bank, and sooner or later this or an equivalent draft is sent back in payment for a supply of American goods despatched to England. So the effect of this transaction, if we were able to isolate it from all other transactions, would be found to be that England had exported £70,000 worth of goods and had received in exchange £72,000 worth of imports, no gold being paid by either side. Secondly, England is the great money-lender of the world. The middle-class investors are few who do not hold bonds or shares in American, Argentine or Indian railways, in Australian banks, or in the government or municipal loans of some country over the sea. The interest on all these securities equally comes back in paper, and this paper is used, some time or other, to purchase goods from those countries or from other countries to which they in turn are exporting goods. And thirdly, England, thanks to Free Trade, is the chief centre of international commerce. Merchants in London, Manchester and elsewhere, are continually buying from foreign producers in one country and selling to foreign consumers in another country. In this business they earn commissions and profits, and these payments are also made ultimately in the form of merchandise. Sir Robert Giffen has calculated that we receive in this way about £70,000,000 a year for the services of our ships, about £90,000,000 for interest on

investments, and about £18,000,000 in commissions and profits,¹ sums which together are about equal to the excess of the imports over the exports. Unless Protection destroyed these sources of income it would make no difference to this excess.

As for the statement that we are losing our gold, it is enough to reply that facts prove the contrary. From 1858 to 1900 there was an excess of imports over exports every year, varying in amount from thirty millions to a hundred and seventy millions. During the same period, however, the total importation of gold was greater than the total exportation by a net balance of £156,000,000.²

And why, finally, should an excess of imports be regarded as a calamity? Ought it not rather to be viewed by every well-wisher of his country with a most profound satisfaction? If foreign nations, in payment for the work done by our ships, for the use of our capital, which it is to their advantage to borrow, and for the services of our merchants, are sending us large quantities of valuable goods, while we send out none in exchange, is that a gain to us or a loss? A tradesman who gives less than he receives is not generally supposed to be growing poorer by his business. It is the same with a nation, and if only the annual excess of imports over exports could be doubled or trebled—unless indeed this were due to the recall of our capital from abroad, which Sir Robert Giffen's figures show is not now the case—the gains from our relations with foreign countries would be immeasurably large, and the British people would soon grow rich beyond even the dreams of avarice.

"Home trade," we are told next, "is more valuable than foreign trade, and if we were to stop both exports and imports it would be an advantage to us. For instance, if by means of Protection we could make wheat-

¹ See the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, March 1899.

² These figures are taken from a leaflet, *Free Trade and Prosperity*, published by the Cobden Club, and are derived from official sources.

growing again profitable in England, the manufacturing towns might send less of their products to America, but they would send more to the rural districts of England, while English farmers and labourers, instead of American, would be employed to supply the towns with wheat. When goods are exchanged between two districts of our own country, the whole advantage of the trade is enjoyed by our own people. When they are exchanged between England and a foreign country, only one-half of the advantage is enjoyed by our own people, and the other half by the foreigner."

That is so, Liberals admit, if the goods can be produced as cheaply at home as they can be had from abroad. For this reason, among others, Free Traders realize to the full that no stone should be left unturned to render British industries as efficient as the same industries in other countries. If, in the case of agriculture, by reforms in the land laws, by technical education, by the development of small holdings and other such means, British farming could be enabled to supply an increased quantity of food-stuffs at a less price than foreign countries can supply them, the advantage to the nation would obviously be great. A larger number of Englishmen would be able to make a living in their own country, emigration would be lessened, the population would increase more rapidly, the rural districts would again be the scene of busy activity, and the nation would be richer in men and in money. But if these results were brought about, not by greater efficiency of production, but by artificially raising the price of food, then the national gain from the prosperity of agriculture would be more than neutralized by other losses.

Why is it that we import wheat at all? Because, for some reason or other, through advantages of soil or climate, through greater enterprise among the farmers, through lower cost of living among the labourers, through better land laws or lower rents—no matter how the result may be reached, it is because the wheat grown in other countries can be sold here at a lower price than

our own wheat. Unless this were so, it would not be brought to our markets from great distances, and farmers would not abandon the planting of wheat for the reason that it yielded no profit.

Now a population of forty millions can only produce a certain maximum quantity of goods in any one year. What kind of goods ought it to produce? Clearly those kinds for the production of which it is best fitted by its soil, its climate, and the character of its people. No one would propose, to quote an old illustration, that heavy customs duties should be levied on oranges brought from abroad in order that the growing of oranges under glass should be encouraged in England. It is obviously better that we should import oranges from Spain and Portugal, where they can be grown cheaply in the open air, and send in exchange woollen and cotton goods which we can manufacture at a less price than the Spaniards and the Portuguese, rather than grow the oranges in England at a great expense, and send the woollen and cotton goods to the British fruit-growers. This is plain. The most vehement opponent of Free Trade would not join issue here. But precisely the same argument which applies to oranges applies also to wheat, and to every other article which we can buy more cheaply from abroad than from our own producers. A Parliament cannot draw up a list of the commodities which its country is best suited to produce. The only test is the price at which they can be placed on the market.

Even if the cheapness of the foreign goods is due only to a low rate of wages in other countries—rarely, however, the case—the position is not altered in the least. This country gains by the cheapness of the goods, while the other countries suffer from a low standard of living. They cannot sell to us without buying in exchange, and we send them the higher type of goods that are made by our better-paid workmen. However much we may regret, from the cosmopolitan point of view, that wages in other lands should be below a right standard, from a national and merely economic standpoint we have cause

to be well satisfied if the result should chance to be that many of the commodities we need for our consumption are sent to us at a moderate price.

If, then, we were to stop or check our foreign trade, and try by a system of Protection to substitute for it a new home trade, the effect would be "to take men away from the work they can do better or more cheaply than others, and set them to what others can do better and more cheaply than they can." The same number of people might be employed at first, but the price of many articles would be raised. When, however, articles are raised in price, fewer of them can be bought; and very soon, the demand falling off, a smaller number of people than before would be employed in their production. Some industries might be stimulated for a time, no doubt, but the general effect on the country would be most injurious. And it is not the duty of the State to favour the part at the expense of the whole.

There is a further argument, of minor but still of real importance, against this proposal, namely, that a system of Protection, by excluding foreign competition, allows Trusts to be formed in complete security, and home producers by combining together, as in America, are more easily able to raise prices artificially and to extort monopoly profits from the nation at large.

"Protection would doubtless raise prices, but then the employers could afford to pay more to the work-people, and wages would rise in proportion."

But wages, it is well known, never do rise as rapidly as prices, and inevitably for a long period the working-classes would be distressed. And unless the consumer in some way suffers through Protection, how can the producer possibly gain? If wages were indeed to rise equally with prices, clearly no one would be better off than before. The work-people would not be in a better position. Nor would the employers; for while they received higher prices than formerly, the cost of producing the goods, on account of the higher wages, would be greater than formerly, and their profits therefore would be no larger. On the other hand, all classes would be

worse off; first, because we should be making articles for which our country was less fitted than other countries, and the real cost of them, in terms of labour, would therefore be larger; secondly, because, wages being higher, without the standard of working-men's efficiency being raised, we should be less able than before to compete with Germany, the United States and other nations, in such markets as those of China, Japan and South America—countries with which we should still wish to carry on trade in order to procure silk, rice, tea, coffee and other articles which cannot be grown in our northern islands.

"Food and raw materials," say some Protectionists, "ought not to be subjected to customs duties, but only manufactured goods."

It is impossible to treat with gravity a scheme founded on the idea that the agriculturists of England would consent for a moment to other industries being favoured and their own ignored, or that a protectionist Parliament could refuse with justice to listen to their claims. And we may ask what is meant by the term "raw materials." Flour is raw material to the baker, but the miller would regard it as a manufactured product. The Bradford spinner would have wool come in free, but would exclude foreign yarn; the weaver would claim that his yarn was his raw material, but would exclude cloth; the dress-maker would claim that cloth must be cheap, but would rigidly shut out all French costumes and German mantles. Is pig-iron, again, a manufactured article or a raw material? Is combed cotton to be considered a raw material, or only rough cotton? Is leather a raw material, or only untanned hides? It would be found impossible to draw the line.

"Our manufactures," say many of the farmers on the other hand, "have always been prosperous. It is absurd to propose Protection for them and not for agriculture, the one industry in England which is really distressed. Obviously the right thing to do would be to tax foreign corn, meat and wool, and let everything else come in free."

The industrial districts would have the same right to

protest if food were made dearer to them without the price of their own products being raised, as the agriculturists would have if the opposite course were followed. Such a measure could not be carried. If you protect anything you must protect everything.

Moreover—and this is a point of the highest importance—taxes on foreign corn, meat and wool would immediately cause a keen competition for farms in England, and the effect of this would at once be seen in a rapid rise in agricultural rents. But a proposal for increasing the price of the people's food and clothing only to swell the rentals of the country landowners, a device, in other words, for transferring money from the poorer classes to the wealthier, must always be strenuously resisted by all who would have the State hold fairly the balance between the various sections of the community.

It may also be pointed out that never since Free Trade has been established has agricultural depression been more intense than at certain times during the period of Protection. One has only to refer to the Annual Registers of 1821 and 1833, to read in the quoted reports of Select Committees on the Depressed State of Agriculture complaints, in almost the same words as those often used to-day, of farmers making no profits, of rents being paid out of capital, of labourers being dismissed from their work, and of the land unable to support its population.¹ Nor should it be forgotten that the distress of recent years has not been more severe in England than in such rigidly protectionist countries as Germany,

¹ Compare a petition presented to the House of Commons in 1831: "We, the gentry, magistrates, clergy, freeholders and occupiers of land in the district of the once opulent vale of Taunton, most humbly represent to your Honourable House that the cruel distress throughout the district in which we reside has arrived at an unparalleled height, and is daily increasing to an alarming extent, with a progressive decline in the value of all productions of the earth, accompanied by an overwhelming burden of taxation such as was never endured by any country, and has swallowed up the capital of the farmer, and brought the greater proportion of independent yeomen to the brink of ruin, which, without the most speedy relief, must terminate in the annihilation of this most

France, Russia, Spain, Austria and Hungary. For Protection of agriculture not only leads to high rents, it encourages apathy in the farming class, it leads them to depend for their prosperity on Acts of Parliament rather than on their own exertions, it keeps the industry in the old grooves, makes it unwilling to seek, and careless of adopting, improvements in the art of cultivation, and it is for this double reason that Protection has proved, both in England and in other countries, ineffective for raising the farming industry to a condition of prosperity above its normal level.

“The taxes are heavy and increasingly heavy. Why not tax foreign goods and make the foreigner who has the benefit of our markets pay towards our revenue?”

The foreigner can never be made to pay the duties on imported goods. An example will make this clear. If a certain quantity of French silk, worth a thousand pounds, is sent to England, and a duty of a hundred pounds is levied on it at the London docks, one of three results must happen: either the silk will no longer be imported; or else the French merchants will accept £900 instead of £1,000 and so bear the burden of the tax; or else the silk will have to be sold in England for £1,100, instead of £1,000. If the silk is no longer imported, clearly the revenue will gain nothing from the new tax. If it had been possible for the Frenchmen to sell the silk for £900, and still make a fair profit, the competition among themselves would have made the price £900 at the beginning, just as it has actually made the price £1,000 instead of £2,000 or £3,000 or £10,000. But the French merchants are not likely to sell permanently at a loss; and the £1,000 will still have to be sent to France in payment for the silk. Therefore, if the silk is sold in England at all, the third result must be the one to occur; the price of

excellent and invaluable body of men.” (Quoted in *Popular Fallacies regarding Trade and Foreign Duties*, edited by Sir E. R. Pearce Edgcumbe, 1893, p. 27.) Yet at that time the duties prevented the importation of any foreign corn at a less price than 74s. a quarter.

the goods must be raised to £1,100, and the £100 of duty will be paid, not by the foreigner, but by the English consumer.

"Germany, the United States and the British colonies have Protection and prosper. It cannot be such a foolish policy after all."

The German people, it is answered, have an exceedingly high standard of general education, great industry and remarkable perseverance; yet they are a far poorer nation than the English. The Americans possess a territory with immense natural resources, and they are characterized by unusual enterprise and inventiveness; advantages which not even Protection can neutralize. The Americans are prosperous in spite of Protection and not because of it. As to the British colonies, it is admitted that sometimes it may be advantageous for a new country, depending wholly on agriculture and mining, to make some sacrifice in order to foster its manufactures in their first beginnings, to give them an opportunity of taking root. But England is not a new country; all her industries are long established, and there is no reason for such a sacrifice. To keep a newborn infant day and night in a warm room may be wise; to follow the same treatment for an adult would be not only costly, but weakening and perhaps fatal. And even in the case of the British colonies it is a matter difficult to determine whether Victoria with Protection has prospered more or has prospered less than New South Wales without it.

"Cobden expected that all the world would soon follow the example of a Free Trade England.¹ He has been proved wrong. Our trade is still hampered by tariffs abroad although we allow foreign goods to come into England free. The position is highly unjust to this country. If we cannot have a really Free Trade, let us at least have equal terms—a Fair Trade, and let us make

¹ "I believe that if you abolish the Corn-law honestly, and adopt Free Trade in its simplicity, there will not be a tariff in Europe that will not be changed in less than five years to follow your example." Speech by Cobden at Manchester, January 15, 1846.

the conditions for the foreigner here the same as the conditions imposed upon us abroad."

This argument is merely a repetition of the old fallacy that the importation of goods is an injury to us and not a service; it still leaves out of account the fact that so long as foreigners sell to us they must, in spite of all tariffs, buy from us in exchange. Universal Free Trade would doubtless be better for England than a partial Free Trade, but a partial Free Trade is better than no Free Trade at all. The customs duties of France, for example, are a real injury to British exporters; but to set up similar duties here would merely double the injury to British exporters. The movement of commerce to and fro between two countries may be compared to the movement of a pendulum; for every beat on the one side there is a corresponding beat on the other. Check the pendulum at one end of the swing, in France, and it will go slower also at the other end, in England; if, to make matters appear more equal, you put a further obstacle at the end left free, you will only succeed in doubling the retardation. One set of barriers hampering foreign exchange is bad enough. To erect a second set of barriers will make the position not better, but greatly worse.

"But a tariff here could be used as a weapon to secure the repeal of the tariffs abroad. Let us retaliate against the Protectionist countries, and then those countries, finding that they are losing their trade with England, would be willing to strike a bargain and abolish their old tariffs on condition that we abolished our new one."

Countries, however, which are wedded to Protection need not meet retaliatory tariffs by lowering their own duties; they may, and generally do, meet the attack by raising them. If England were to put a 20 per cent. duty on French goods, and were then to offer to repeal this duty if France would repeal her duties on English goods to an equal extent, what is to prevent the French Chambers from immediately raising their tariff by 20 per cent. above its present figure, and then answering England by saying, "We will bargain with you, if you

wish, but only on the basis that both countries shall abolish their new tariffs and the relations between us be restored to their first position"? And this is usually the course that events are found to take. "Tariff Wars" of this kind have been frequent on the Continent; they have rarely had any result except to dislocate trade, to cause widespread distress and to inflame international animosities; the state of affairs at the end remaining much the same as it was at the beginning. Sir Robert Peel, who had more experience than most men of this process, declared that he was "wearied with our long and unavailing attempts to enter into satisfactory commercial treaties with other nations;" this failure was indeed one of the chief reasons that led him to abandon the Protectionist policy. For England, the country which is the standing example of great prosperity under Free Trade, herself to adopt Protection is not the way to induce the rest of the world to abandon it. "At last," the politicians of other nations would say, "England is converted to our view; she also now admits that our protectionist doctrine is right." And they would be all the more determined to maintain the system they have.¹

"But let us at least form a Customs Union with our own colonies and dependencies; let us admit their goods on better terms than the goods of foreigners, and let them in return do the same for us. An Imperial Customs Union would be the most effective means of knitting the Empire together and making it an indissoluble whole."

Liberals answer that the means proposed to this end are as unsuitable as the end itself is excellent. By all means let all that is possible be done to strengthen the feeling of union between the scattered parts of the British Empire. But to raise the price of the Englishman's food for the sake of the corn-grower of Canada, of

¹ After a speech by Lord Salisbury in 1892 in favour of retaliatory duties, Mr. McKinley at a meeting in New York simply said, "We have a right to be cheerful when Lord Salisbury has given his adherence to the Republican doctrine of Protection."

his clothes for the sake of the wool-grower of Australia and New Zealand, of his boots for the sake of the leather merchant of South Africa, of his sugar for the sake of the West Indian planter, is hardly the method which far-seeing men would propose in order to increase the feeling of friendship of the English people towards these several colonies. That an Imperial Customs Union would make these articles dearer cannot be a matter of doubt; for unless the prices were raised by restricting foreign supplies to the advantage of colonial supplies, the colonies would gain no benefit, and the Customs Union would be useless for its object. And it is an economic law that there cannot be two prices for the same article in the same market; if American wheat were made dearer, Canadian wheat would rise in price equally. The advantages which England would receive in return would be small. The bulk of the trade of the colonies, of India and of our other dependencies, apart from that which they carry on among themselves, is already in our hands. If a Customs Union were to secure to England a large part of the remainder, on the other hand her commerce with the rest of the world would be greatly lessened by the new barriers restricting its flow.

Imagine also the formidable problems that would arise if once this ill-omened scheme were put into operation. A depression of trade occurring in England might cause widespread distress among the poor. The question whether food should be made cheaper by lowering the duty on foreign corn imposed by the Customs Union, would at once become a matter of eager discussion. The English people would answer emphatically in the affirmative; the Canadian farmers, dreading ruin through American competition, would answer equally emphatically in the negative. Or perhaps Lancashire might find its cotton trade declining because German manufacturers could import raw cotton from the United States cheaper than we, owing to the Customs Union, could import it ourselves. At once there would be a conflict of interest between England, a cotton manufacturing country, on the one side, India and Egypt, cotton pro-

ducing countries, on the other. Suppose again that the United States were to offer to lower its tariff on British and Colonial goods if the Customs Union would do the same for American goods. Once more the interests of England would pull in one direction, those of Canada and other colonies in the opposite direction. Whatever central authority was formed to establish, and to amend from time to time, the Imperial customs tariff, would be torn by continual conflicts. If some Machiavellian enemy of the British Empire had wished to introduce a cause of constant discord and dispute into the relations, now so harmonious, between England and her colonies and dependencies, he could probably indeed find no method better adapted to that end than to set them quarrelling over the general character and the smaller details of an Imperial customs tariff.

On the one hand, then, we have a system, already established, under which the country has greatly prospered, which has enabled a large population, crowded together on two small islands, to obtain cheaply the food and raw materials indispensable for its comfort and its industry, which has allowed capital and labour to flow naturally into the channels that the character of the land and of the people has made most profitable, and under which the Empire has been welded together by powerful bonds of sympathy. On the other hand we have offered to us a policy which was deliberately rejected by the nation after a long and full experience of its effects, which would diminish the comfort of the people by raising the price of commodities, would contract our export trade by checking our imports, would probably encourage the formation of trust monopolies, would tax the people at large for the benefit of country landlords, and, in the form in which it is most often advocated, would seriously disturb the cordial relations that prevail among the various portions of our world-wide Empire. The choice should not be doubtful.

The protectionist creed is unpopular, and its advocates

take on many disguises. Sometimes they pose as the guardians of our herds from disease, and would exclude cattle coming from countries in which, as it happens, no disease exists. Sometimes they are the friends of the West Indian planter, and, on the plea that the most fertile islands in the world can grow nothing but sugar, ask the nation to levy duties on the foreign sugar which continental Parliaments have been good enough to make specially cheap for us, by giving bounties on its export to this country. (If lumps of sugar rained down from the sky, they would no doubt have the State forbid the people to collect and use them, out of consideration for the West Indian growers.) And sometimes they are the careful warders of the national defence, and would have England in times of peace produce, at an immense cost, all, or most, of the corn she consumes, in order that, in the event of a war and a blockade of her coasts, she might have enough to feed her people—disregarding the fact that we maintain an overwhelmingly powerful fleet precisely in order to make such a blockade impossible. The excuse is a matter of indifference. The ultimate purpose is the same.

The Liberal party, by inheritance the champion of Free Trade, holds it to be one of its most useful functions to strip these disguises, to expose the fallacies by the help of which the Free Trade Policy is attacked, to defend in all its integrity, in principle and in detail, in letter and in spirit, the beneficent system which the zeal of the Liberals of an earlier day happily succeeded in establishing.

It is often said that the life-blood of business is confidence. Trade cannot prosper unless there is among the commercial classes a feeling of assurance that the national institutions are stable, and that the national policy will be sober. This confidence the Liberal party has always sought to preserve. In some savage countries the natives, when they wish to gather the fruit of a tree,

cut down its trunk. In some civilized countries there are revolutionaries, who, for the sake of a small immediate advantage, are willing to sever the stem of national prosperity. Liberalism is not only a policy of change. It has in it an element of conservatism also. It would maintain a settled government. It would safeguard the public credit. It would keep the peace. It would secure the observance of contracts. It would protect the legitimate ownership of property. It seeks indeed to combine the two principles which the Comtists tell us are at work in every society, the principle of permanence and the principle of progression.

And the policy of social reform itself may be included among the means by which the Liberal party would foster trade. The labour policy is a commercial policy also.

It is not a mere coincidence that those countries which are most successful in the competition for trade—the United States, England and Germany—are those in which the working-classes have the highest standard of comfort. Nor is the high standard to be regarded merely as a result, and not as a cause, of the success. Set the Italian workman with his twelve hours' day, his meagre wage, his low diet, his inferior education, to compete with the Chicago artizan or the Sheffield engineer, men who are leisured, well-paid, well-fed and fairly educated, and it will soon be found that cheap labourers do not always mean cheap labour. "The great original capital of head, heart and hand" is still the most productive of all capitals. Cairnes showed long ago that no labour is so costly as the unpaid labour of the slave; Brassey declared as the result of his vast experience that a high standard of life in the workpeople is the most valuable aid to the employer; recent investigators have plainly shown that there is a real "economy of high wages"; and it is now widely recognized that no doctrine is more profoundly mistaken than the doctrine that low wages and long hours must always lessen the cost of production, that the country which most fully enjoys these "advantages" will carry off most

prizes in the competition for trade.¹ The general might as well regret the good condition of his troops, as the manufacturer complain of a high standard of living among his men. Liberals claim that their reforms in education, housing, temperance, in the conditions of employment and in the relief of distress, are to be counted, not, as some imagine, as attacks on the commercial classes, but rather as among the surest means of aiding the efforts of those classes, and of increasing the prosperity of trade.

Technical education is a more direct means of raising the industrial efficiency of the nation. The apprenticeship system has decayed and there are no signs of a probable revival. New conditions of trade demand new requirements in the artizan; and not in the artizan alone. Chemistry, engineering and mathematics dominate the modern workshop; the office has relations with every quarter of the globe; and the employer finds the need of a higher standard of specialized education in almost all classes of his subordinates.

Technical education includes the development in the child of the general use of his eyes and hands; the training of the craftsman for the work of his particular trade; the teaching in commercial subjects and foreign

¹ See *The Economy of High Wages*, by Schoenhof. Also *The Dearness of Cheap Labour*, by Mr. David Schloss, *Fortnightly Review*, January 1893; a number of quotations collected by Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell in *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, pp. 44-55 (1st edition); and, especially, Mr. J. A. Hobson's *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, ch. x.

"In England we have undoubtedly suffered from the disadvantage of low-priced labour. . . . Low-priced labour does not mean necessarily cheap production, nor does dear labour mean a dear product. . . . America with dear labour can and does to-day produce cheap boots and shoes, watches, and many other articles, simply from the fact that the dear price of labour stimulated the manufacturers of these articles in the States to produce machines which would enable them to compete with the watches, etc., made with cheap labour in Europe. . . . In England we must in the future pay our workmen better, and the workman must make his services of more value, and the product must be cheaper and better." (From an article on "Our Commercial Supremacy and How to Maintain it," by Mr. W. H. Lever, one of the largest of British manufacturers, *New Liberal Review*, March 1901, p. 258.)

languages of the clerk and the agent; the scientific education of the engineer, the chemist and the electrician; the artistic education of the designer; even the instruction of the managers of industry and trade in the special subjects that their profession requires. It is not to be a substitute, indeed, for the practical training of the office and the workshop, but a supplement to it. It is not to supersede the broader humanistic education—for the man after all is more than the work—but to be added to it.

Since this technical training, like other education, is too costly for the individual to obtain unaided, and since private benevolence is quite unable to meet the need, this duty also falls to the State; and although the State has done much in recent years to forward technical education, every expert agrees that England has been outstripped in this by many of her industrial rivals. To make good the deficiency, by establishing, in connection with the system of secondary education, a sufficient number of well-equipped technical schools of all kinds, is one of the most obvious tasks of a progressive commercial policy.

But if the advance of labour is useful in the long run to trade, through raising the standard of comfort and thus increasing the efficiency of the work-people, in so far as it is accompanied by strikes and lock-outs it is clearly for the time injurious to trade. For the State to secure industrial peace would be among the most useful of the means by which it could aid industrial prosperity.

Surely it is small credit to the common-sense of the nation that these conflicts should so constantly occur; that time after time when masters and men cannot come to a ready agreement on terms of employment, the workmen should go home to their cottages, the employers to their houses, the factories be laid idle, and a trial of endurance begun, with the deliberate purpose on the one side of exhausting the savings of the workmen and reducing them and their families to the extremity of distress, and on the other of crippling the trade and bringing heavy financial loss on the employers, until at

last one party or the other should purchase peace at the price of submission; that meanwhile the country should be deprived of the commodities it needs, or be forced to obtain them at an inflated cost; that employers and employed in other trades, innocent of all dispute, should be thrown equally idle by the dislocation; and that opportunity should be given to the foreign rivals of English industry to capture the markets left unprovided through the stoppage of work. It is surely a cause of indignation that, through such disputes, an amount of labour force equal to the constant work of forty thousand men is now annually lost to the nation.¹

Yet we cannot be led by this to condemn the trade union movement as a whole, or its demands for a minimum standard of comfort in all cases, and, beyond that, for a fair share in the gains of industry. The observer would rather condemn the inopportune manner in which these demands are sometimes pressed, and the unreasonable manner in which they are often resisted, and would condemn most of all the refusal of either party, when no root principle is at stake, to submit its quarrel to arbitration.

In New Zealand, arbitration in trade disputes may be compulsory. Either the employers or the work-people have the right to summon the other party before a judicial court, and the award of that court, whether acceptable or not, is legally binding and can be enforced by penalties. The plan seems to have been very successful in practice. It has recently been applied in New South Wales. But whether it can be adopted under the more complicated conditions that prevail in England has yet to be considered by public opinion. Meanwhile, Liberals hold that the State should make the fullest use of the powers it has already assumed to establish permanent Boards of voluntary conciliation in each trade or district; where no such Board exists, to bring the

¹ This calculation is made from the figures of time lost through strikes and lock-outs in the six years 1893 to 1898, published by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade in the *Labour Gazette*, of January 1899.

parties, when a dispute is threatened, to a friendly conference under the presidency of a nominee of the Board of Trade, and if an open conflict has already occurred or nevertheless arises, to appoint an arbitrator to whom both parties may refer their case. By these methods many disputes have already been prevented or decided, and through their agency trade may be largely freed from the disturbance of these disastrous conflicts.

A number of detailed improvements in law and legal procedure form the last of the groups of measures through which Liberalism seeks to foster industry. The Acts, particularly, that relate to companies, and those relating to patents, notoriously need amendment; and there are many smaller reforms demanded by Chambers of Commerce, which would unquestionably command the support of a Liberal House of Commons. To lessen the excessive costliness of securing private Acts of Parliament is a matter of still greater importance. For when the private Bill needed to authorize some important railway, or electric or other undertaking, can only be passed through the committees of both Houses at an expenditure of tens or even hundreds of thousands of pounds, it is clear that enterprise is hampered by a formidable obstacle.¹

¹ It is said that to pass the original Great Northern Railway Bill through Parliament cost as much as to make the railway from Turin to the Alps. (Earl Russell, *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 352.)

"*The Manchester Courier* estimates that the inquiry into the proposal for an electric express train between Manchester and Liverpool has cost on an average something between £4,000 and £5,000 a day. The proceedings occupied eleven Parliamentary days, so that if this calculation is correct there has been rendered absolutely abortive by the refusal of the Committee an expenditure of from £40,000 to £50,000." (*Westminster Gazette*, May 24, 1900.) The Bill was passed in the subsequent session after a further large expenditure. To give another typical case, in 1870 the Town of Newry in Ireland, jointly with a large manufacturer in the district, promoted a Bill to obtain power for borrowing £27,000 for waterworks and £15,000 for other purposes. The portion of the Bill relating to the waterworks was opposed, but unsuccessfully. The promoters, however, had to pay no less than £8,376 in costs in order to be allowed an expenditure of £27,000. The expense to

Finally, the system of civil law in general is admitted to be unduly expensive, its "barbarous technicalities," as Maine called them, are admitted to be unnecessarily confusing, and a reform would be generally regarded as a boon to British trade. No doubt it would be attended by serious difficulties. To codify and simplify the ancient system of civil law, without injuring its spirit or lessening its elasticity, would be a task so delicate, and at the same time so vast, that no one can wonder it has been long postponed. But, in spite of the difficulty, the business world is entitled to press for a judicial system that shall be simple, speedy and cheap, and any policy which includes among its aims the active encouragement of commerce must include among its proposals the improvement and simplification of law.

the opposing parties was many thousands of pounds in addition. The population of the town at that time was 15,000. (These particulars have been kindly supplied by the Town Clerk of Newry.)

CHAPTER IX

TAXATION

WE have no intention of dealing at length with the difficult subject of taxation. The reader will not be asked to enter far into its gloomy recesses. The disputes of economists over the relations between local taxation and national, the comparative burdens on real property and on personal, the rating of machinery, the method of assessment, or the classification of taxes, will not be allowed to detain us. We shall stay no longer than is necessary to make clear the Liberal attitude towards taxation in general, and the chief amendments in our system of finance that reformers now propose.

Of recent years the expenditure of the nation has increased at a speed that gives the gravest concern to statesmen, not only of the Liberal party, but of all parties. Apart from the charges of the South African War, the normal annual expenditure has been raised by very nearly 50 per cent. in ten years—from 1891 to 1901; by 100 per cent. in thirty years—from 1871 to 1901. The cost of the army and navy in the same ten years has been almost doubled, in the same thirty years almost trebled. In addition, the National Debt, owing to the South African War, has been raised by considerably over a hundred millions since 1899. The increase of expenditure has been of late five times as rapid as the increase of population, and, so far as it is possible to estimate, three times as rapid as the

increase in wealth.¹ The position clearly demands the most serious consideration on the part of all classes of the people. It is plain that Parliament cannot continue

1	1871.	1881.	1891.	1901, or latest year.	Increase per cent. 1901, or latest year, over 1871.	Increase per cent. 1901, or latest year, over 1891.
National Expenditure. ¹ Millions of £.	61·8	71·6	82·9	123·3 ² (1901-2, Budget Estimate.)	99·5	48·7
Expenditure on Army and Navy. Millions of £.	22·9	24·6	31·7	60·9 ² (1901-2, Budget Estimate.)	165·9	92·7
Population of United Kingdom. Millions of Persons. }	31·5	34·9	37·7	41·5 (1901)	31·7	9·9
Assessments to Income- Tax. ³ Millions of £.	440	549	661	788 (1900)	79·1	19·2

¹ Excluding expenditure on Postal Services, which are more than met by the receipts.

² Excluding war charges.

³ There are no reliable figures showing the total income of the people at these dates, but the rate of increase of the wealth of the nation as a whole may be roughly measured by the rate of increase of property assessed to income-tax.

“All we can hope is to take advantage of every opportunity which is consistent with the interests and honour of our country in order to resist and arrest the stream of expenditure which, I entirely agree, is one of the greatest dangers that threaten this country.”—Lord Salisbury, in the House of Lords, July 23, 1901.

“I regard this enormous increase, if continued, as a real danger

the present rate of increase, spending at the end of one decade half as much again as it spent at the beginning, without the gravest effects on the standard of comfort, on the accumulation of capital, on the trade, and on the credit of the nation.

The position of the national finances depends mainly on the question of armaments; but the question of armaments cannot, of course, be treated solely from the standpoint of the financier. A Town Council would not be praised if, in order to lower the rates, it disbanded a part of its police force, careless whether the smaller force would be able to keep order in the streets; nor should we think well of a Government which, in its eagerness to lighten the taxes, reduced the army and navy to a point that endangered the security of the country. The growing cost of armaments is a matter demanding separate consideration. Important as are its bearings on the subject of this chapter, we are obliged therefore to postpone its discussion till we come to treat from a wider standpoint the general question of national defence.¹

Liberals, with some few exceptions, hold that the millions lavishly granted by the recent Agricultural Rating Acts and Tithe Rent-Charge Rating Act have been granted unnecessarily. They believe that a stricter guardianship by the House of Commons over the national purse might effect many economies of detail.² They have reason to think that the money's value is not received for much of the money spent by the public

to the country. It has gone on in spite of my efforts, and those of others, to preserve something like economy in our expenditure. . . . Let us seriously consider whether the time has not come when, so far as we can, we should have some regard to the ancient virtue of economy. . . . In this question of economy is wrapped up much of the future prosperity of the country."—Sir M. Hicks-Beach, at Bristol, May 16, 1900.

¹ See pp. 363–379.

² In the session of 1901, 76 per cent. of the money-votes, dealing with sums amounting to £131,286,881, were closed, and passed without opportunity for full discussion. On a large proportion of these no discussion at all was allowed.

departments. Ever since the days when Joseph Hume, by his unflagging persistency, bored the House of Commons into a policy of thrift, they have been the active partisans of national economy, and at the present time the immense and sudden growth in the figures of the annual Budget makes the Liberal party more than ever earnest in pleading for a greater watchfulness in the disbursement of public funds.

None the less, for Liberals to pretend that they were in all things the advocates of a narrow frugality would be, it must be admitted, to give a very false impression of their real attitude. There is expenditure which is productive, as well as expenditure which is unproductive ; some expenditure is loss, but some also is investment, and in many things a policy of generosity may be wiser than a policy of stint. Eager as they are to restrict outgoings wherever restriction will not cause injury, it is clear that, in matters of social reform especially, Liberals are constantly urging the State rather to spend more money than less.

Many of the more important social reforms that are proposed make, indeed, small claims on the public purse. Those which deal with housing, with temperance, with the conditions of private employment, with the land laws, with State trading, are none of them measures which need cost more than trifling sums ; the last of the list will not only impose no burdens but promises to yield considerable revenue. Yet on the other hand there are some which, in the first instance, must needs be costly ; you cannot improve elementary education, you cannot set up a large system of secondary and technical schools, you cannot deal with the problems of the aged poor and of the unemployed, you cannot provide open spaces, you cannot embellish the cities, without spending, and spending on a large scale. We are accustomed to speak of Peace, Retrenchment and Reform as three harmonious principles. Peace, indeed, is always the friend of Retrenchment ; Reform may sometimes be its enemy.

Taxation for such purposes, Liberals urge, should not be regarded as an evil. Expenditure here is productive.

The money spent is money invested. For, in the first place, it cannot be repeated too often or emphasized too strongly that the chief sources of the national wealth lie in the intelligence, the skill, the health and the industry of those who ultimately produce that wealth, of the working-classes ; that to keep these ignorant, to leave them degraded and unhealthy through bad surroundings, to leave ever threatening them the prospect of destitution in times of bad trade or in the years of old age, is to lower their character and efficiency, and therefore their economic value to the country ; that to refuse to spend money on improving the human machinery in our factories and mines and ships is as short-sighted as to refuse to spend on perfecting the machinery of iron and steel ; that, in a word, expenditure on social reform will yield a direct monetary return in a larger production and a more flourishing trade.¹ In the second place, pauperism and crime involve no small expense ; the Boards of Guardians are spending twelve millions a year in keeping paupers from starvation, the police and prison authorities eight millions in holding criminals in check ; measures which, by improving education and lessening misery, helped to

¹ Under the head of sickness alone there is the possibility of an immense economic saving. The figures of the Foresters' Friendly Society, including nearly a million members, show that on the average each member is incapacitated by sickness for thirteen days in the year (Quarterly Report of the Ancient Order of Foresters, October 1901, p. 72). Probably among the working-classes as a whole the average would be higher, since it is the better paid, and therefore better fed and housed, among them who chiefly belong to Friendly Societies. But taking thirteen days as the figure, taking the value of each person's labour (a different thing, of course, from his wages) to be £100 a year—by no means an excessive estimate—and accepting the number of adult workers as eleven millions, we have here an annual loss of no less than £39,200,000. Just as it has been found possible to reduce the death-rate in England and Wales by nearly 20 per cent. in fifty years, so it may be possible to reduce very largely the future rate of sickness. For no small part of it is known to be due to bad housing, to intemperance, to industrial accidents, to unhealthy work-places, to over-work and other such causes, and measures which succeeded in lessening these evils could hardly fail to save a considerable part of this annual waste of thirty-nine million pounds.

drain away the cesspools of pauperism and crime would be likely to recoup in the long run no small part of their cost. Lastly, a judicious expenditure on social reforms is defended on the ground that it will increase the total of happiness. The hardship imposed by levying the necessary funds will be far less than the benefits conferred by spending them, and the greater well-being of the people is a not unimportant entry on the credit side of the account.

There are men whose vision is so narrow that they oppose any and every increase in public expenditure no matter how profitable the return might be. They would rather be citizens of a poor country or of an unhealthy and backward town, than surrender any fraction of their income to make their country prosperous, or their town pure and commodious, and would doubtless vote against the millennium itself if it were likely to cost a sixpenny rate. With such an attitude the Liberals of to-day have no sympathy. To the grumbling tax-payer or rate-payer, who grudges every shilling spent on the schools or on the streets, on the drainage or on the parks, on the training of the "children of the State," or on the rescue of the deserving unemployed from the abyss of pauperism, they urge that no waste is so costly as to refuse to spend on necessary objects, that miserliness is no more a virtue in a nation or in a city than it is in an individual, that expenditure is not an injury when it is likely to bear profitable fruit in a larger productivity, in indirect savings, and in a greater happiness for the body of the people. "For there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

Two reforms of large importance are proposed in the present distribution of the burdens of national taxation. They are likely to be prominent in the financial discussions of the near future. They are urged because it is held that the distribution of those burdens is now in some ways unfair. On their necessity and merits, how-

ever, it will be impossible to form an opinion unless we are first agreed what it is we mean when we speak of "fairness" in taxation; and before discussing them we must try to arrive at some broad principle that shall furnish a measure of justice by which to test the present system of taxation and the reforms proposed.

This principle Liberals find in the doctrine that each class and each individual ought to pay to the revenue in proportion to ability to pay, that each should be called upon to make, as far as is practicable, an "equal sacrifice" in providing the funds needed by the State.

By writers on public finance this rule is generally accepted. The average tax-payer and rate-payer, however, is often inclined to dispute it.

It is little better than robbery, we are sometimes told, to tax men merely according to their ability to pay. The State renders certain services; it is those who benefit by the services who ought to bear the cost of them. To take money from one class in order to spend it on another is obviously wrong. "Why," says a man of the middle-class, "should I be rated in order to provide Board Schools which my children will never enter, to maintain free libraries which I shall never use, to improve districts in which I do not live, or to relieve a destitution into which I am not likely to fall? Benefit, not ability, is the right principle of taxation, and if you raise the rates and taxes for the advantage of the working-men, it is the working-men who ought to bear the burden."

Liberals answer that all national expenditure which is wise benefits the whole nation, and that it is impossible to tell, except in rare cases, in what proportion the benefit falls to each class.

A grant, for example, is made for establishing technical schools for artizans. Is it the artizans who are to be considered the beneficiaries and who ought to be taxed for the purposes of the grant? They receive, it is true, a training free of cost, and through their greater skill are able to earn higher wages. Clearly they benefit. But then the employers also benefit; they are provided with

more skilful workmen and are able to make higher profits. And surely the public at large benefit as well, for the goods they need are better made and are perhaps lowered in price, and the national trade, in which all classes are interested, is maintained and encouraged. Who can tell to which of the three the advantage is greatest, and what proportion of the cost, on the principle of benefit, each of them should bear?

Let the man of means who objects to see his rates and taxes spent on schemes of social improvement and thinks he gains no advantage in return, consider what would be the effect on his own daily life and on his wider interests if that expenditure were stopped, if there were no Board Schools, no free libraries, no sanitary improvements in the poorer districts, no relief given to the destitute, no efforts made to improve the mental and physical capacities of the working-classes. He would soon realize that he, as well as they, would be a heavy loser. Is he an employer of labour? His work-people would be of a low type, inefficient and careless, and if he is competing in business with the manufacturers of Germany and the United States, he would find himself heavily handicapped. Is he a householder? The servants in his home, the nurses of his children, would be drawn from an ignorant and degraded class. A consumer, the goods he bought would be dear or badly made. A citizen, he would be out-voted by a discontented, ill-informed and perhaps revolutionary electorate. Interested in his country's security and greatness, he would see its soldiers and sailors inferior, the colonists who went to build up its empire men of a low type. The streets would be full of starving beggars to whom no Poor Law gave relief. Crime would be widespread. The neglected slums would be centres of epidemics from which his own neighbourhood could hardly hope to escape. Poorer, therefore, through the decline of his business and through the costliness of the articles he used, inconvenienced by the inefficiency of his own household, subjected to the rule of a turbulent democracy, a citizen of an empire lower in prestige, in danger

of attacks from a criminal class of formidable numbers, liable to diseases through the unhealthiness of his town, he would speedily find in how many ways his own welfare was dependent on the welfare of the poorer classes, and how large was the benefit he had indirectly gained from the efforts of the State to raise the people. He would soon be compelled to confess that he also drew no small advantage from public expenditure on social reform.

The individual is largely determined by the society. If a man who lives in the twentieth century is different from a man who lived in the tenth century, it is not only because he has inherited other qualities, but also because the civilization in which he has been bred and in which he moves is different. If an Englishman is different from a Chinaman, it is not only because his race-type is different, but also because England is different from China. Let the nation be of a high order, each person born into it is more likely to be noble. Let the nation be base, no member of it can fail in some measure to be degraded.

These, then, are the reasons in brief which justify the doctrine that all expenditure which succeeds in improving the part benefits, not that part alone, but the whole of the community, and this is why all sections may justly be called upon to share the cost of measures which in their direct and immediate application touch only the well-being of the poorer.

All should share the cost ; but in what proportions ? Of some expenditures practically the whole benefit falls to a certain district, and then that district may fairly be charged with practically the whole of the burden. The advantage to the people of Manchester, for instance, of a park in Plymouth is so remote, is so infinitesimal compared with the advantage gained by the people of Plymouth, that it would be absurd to require Manchester to pay any part of the expense of providing it. But when we come to questions, not between place and place, but between class and class, it is perfectly clear that no estimate of comparative benefit can possibly be

made. As in the case of technical schools it would need the powers of omniscience to say whether the artisans, the employers, or the public at large benefited the most, so also in the case of other schools, of the Poor Law, of sanitary reforms, of the army and navy, of the national debt, no one could successfully attempt to fix the advantage gained by any one group of men compared with any other.

Certainly the benefit enjoyed is not to be measured simply by the amount of property owned. This used, indeed, to be the accepted theory. When the view prevailed that the State was nothing more than an agency for protecting property, it was natural to say that men should pay for the protection according to the amount of property that they held. Taxes were regarded in the light of premiums of insurance against burglary, and would be payable at so much per cent. on the value insured. A man worth £5,000 a year was held to enjoy ten times as much protection as a man with £500 a year, and should therefore pay just ten times as much to the State. Now-a-days, however, few thinkers would accept this doctrine. To defend property is recognized to be only one of the functions of government among many. Education, indeed, is an antidote to crime, but the schools exist, not primarily to prevent crime, but to make men better. The army is useful for the preservation of order, but the army is maintained less for that purpose than for defending the national independence in which all orders of Englishmen, rich and poor alike, take an equal pride. Government is not on a cash basis. To assume that the benefit from the services of the State is to be measured by the wealth protected, is wholly to misunderstand the real duties which the State sets out to perform.

You cannot tax the various classes, therefore, according to the benefit they receive, for all are served by every wise expenditure, and you cannot tell what proportion of the advantage falls to the share of each. That being so, we are obliged to accept the principle that every taxpayer should be called upon to bear an equal burden, to

make an "equal sacrifice" in providing the revenue, for no other alternative has ever been suggested by the students who have sought for a gauge of justice in matters of taxation. This rule is now generally adopted by economists. It is the leading rule in the fiscal policy of Liberalism. Applied in practice it will be found to justify, and indeed to demand, the changes in the existing system of national finance which we now propose to discuss.

If the burdens are to be equal between class and class, the taxes must be graduated—a larger percentage must be taken from the higher incomes than is taken from the lower.

Three men, let us suppose, are about to have a meal ; one has fourpence to spend, the second four shillings, and the third four pounds. You tax them at the same rate, and demand from each a fourth of his money. But such an arithmetical equality is clearly not an equality of burden. The penny of the first is worth much more to him than the shilling is worth to the second, and infinitely more than the pound is worth to the third. The one would be quite unable to satisfy his hunger, the other would only have to forego one course out of a long menu, the last would still be able to enjoy a complete and costly meal. So it is with incomes. Tax at an equal percentage a labourer with £40 a year, a shop-keeper with £400, a merchant with £4,000, and a great capitalist with £40,000, and you will be taking from the first necessities, from the second comforts, from the third luxuries, and from the fourth nothing at all except the barren pleasure of possessing fresh accumulations of unused wealth. To be just, the necessities of life should be altogether free from taxation, for any sacrifice, however small, exacted from those who have nothing but necessities, must obviously be greater than the largest sacrifice which in practice it would be found possible to demand from those in a better position. On the incomes above that minimum the rate of tax-

ation should gradually rise in proportion to the wealth enjoyed.

Secondly, if the sacrifice is to be equal, earned incomes must be taxed more lightly than unearned incomes. For the first are precarious; the incomes of the artizan, the lawyer or the doctor depend upon their health and vigour; they are suspended during illness and are stopped by old age. The second are permanent; the landowner and the capitalist may draw their revenues as long as they live, irrespective of changes affecting themselves. The professional man, again, has to put by a part of his receipts in order to provide for his family in the event of his death. The man with land or capital behind him knows that he can bequeath it, and is not necessarily obliged to save. The same tax would not imply the same burden.

Now the second of these rules is fairly adequately applied already by means of the Death Duties. The man who has inherited his income has paid a large capital sum to the State; his yearly receipts are less in proportion, and if his property has paid 8 per cent. in these duties—a frequent rate on large estates—his income is less than it would otherwise be by one shilling and sevenpence in the pound. Some re-adjustment in the scale of the Death Duties may perhaps be held desirable, but in the main they do succeed in securing an approach to equality of burden in the taxation of earned and unearned incomes. Under this head there is small ground for requiring a change. But the first rule, that of graduation, is at present very imperfectly observed.

It is a common error, but a very gross error, to suppose that the working-classes in England are lightly taxed. On the contrary, the taxes they pay are about equal on an average to one and threepence in the pound on their income.¹ Every time they buy a pound of tea they pay sixpence to the Exchequer; of every shilling they spend on tobacco, nearly tenpence goes to the revenue; the sugar in their cups, the cocoa on the

¹ See foot-note on the following page.

breakfast table, the currants and raisins in the puddings, the beer at dinner, the glass of spirits in the evening, are each of them tax-collectors. By such means the working-classes are made to furnish each year some fifty millions to the public purse.

An estimate of the comparative burden of taxation on the various classes of the nation is not easy to form, but the following may be offered as approximately correct.

We take the year 1900-1, because in that year the revenue was almost exactly equal to what is now the normal expenditure of the country. The additional twopence on the income-tax, the half-penny in the pound duty on sugar, and the duty on exported coal, imposed in 1901-2 are therefore left out of account, because those taxes, or other taxes equivalent in amount, will probably be remitted when the charges of the South African War have been met. We exclude also the Death Duties, since they are the special imposts on unearned incomes and stand apart from the general scheme of taxation. We accept the estimate of expert authorities that the working-classes, who form about four-fifths of the population, pay four-fifths of the indirect taxes; in other words that the average working-man and his family consume as much beer, spirits, tobacco, sugar and other dutiable articles as the average member of any other class, and pay therefore an equal share of the taxes on those articles.¹ The average income of a

¹ Census of 1891; number of males above the age of 25, 8,141,000. Estimated number of males above the age of 21, 9,340,000. Number of adult male wage-earners, 1893, 7,300,000 (Sir R. Giffen's estimate. Evidence before Royal Commission on Labour (Sitting as a Whole) 6913.) Proportion of these wage-earners to total number of adult males, 78 per cent., or very nearly four-fifths.

Sir Henry Fowler estimated in 1899 that the working-classes paid 45 millions of the taxes on commodities, which was at that time almost exactly four-fifths of their total yield. (Speech at Wolverhampton, April 6, 1899.)

Lord Welby, for many years Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, has said, "Competent authorities have held, and I think it is a conclusion which is generally accepted, that four-fifths of the taxation on articles of consumption is paid by the working-classes." (Speech in the House of Lords, July 23, 1901.) [P.T.O.]

working-class family, containing one adult male worker, is taken at £85, corresponding to Sir Robert Giffen's estimate, in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour, of "rather more than £80." And in order to be on the safe side we assume that the whole of the revenue from Stamp Duties, Licence Duties, Land-Tax, Inhabited House Duty, and the profits of the Post Office, is drawn from the middle and wealthy classes, although it is certain that a proportion of it, especially of the Post Office profits, is contributed by working-people. No fair method of calculating the incidence of these taxes can be suggested except to say that they are paid in the same proportion as the income-tax. Their yield in 1900-1 was equal to an income-tax of slightly over eightpence in the pound, and they are included in the estimate accordingly. We arrive then at these figures—

An average working-class income is taxed 6·9 per cent.¹

An income of £200 is taxed . . . 4·6 "

" " £500 " . . . 7·0 "

" " £5,000 " . . . 8·4 "

Estimates of this kind can of course make no pretence to exact accuracy, but the figures probably furnish a not unfaithful picture of the actual effect of the existing system of taxation. Working-class incomes are taxed at a considerably higher rate than incomes of £200 a

Mr. G. W. Blunden's estimate is the same. (*Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 1896, p. 649.)

This conclusion may be further verified by taking the known consumption of alcohol, tea, etc., among working-class families and calculating the taxes paid upon each. Practically the same result will be reached.

But even if the wealthier classes consume rather more per head of these articles, and the working-classes rather less, the former are such a small minority in the nation that the figures of consumption by the latter, and the figures, therefore, of their taxation, would be only slightly affected.

¹ Yield of duties on alcohol, tobacco, tea, etc., 1900-1, £60,654,000.

The census of 1891 showed that the adult males numbered almost exactly one-fourth of the population. Taking the same proportion for 1901 (the age figures for that year not yet being

year and thereabouts, they are taxed at about the same rate as incomes of £500, and at a rate only slightly lower than incomes of £5,000 and over. But whoever admits that the principle of graduation is just, must at once recognize that a scale such as this is highly unjust and clearly demands reform.

It is true that by far the greater part of the revenue paid by the working-classes is drawn from the duties on alcohol. For reasons other than financial it is agreed on all hands that these duties should be kept at a high figure. To repeal or reduce them would be to remove one of the most effective checks on intemperance. And those who have the smallest incomes, incomes at the minimum, or only just above the minimum, needed to obtain the necessities of life, cannot complain at being taxed on these articles, for the very fact that they prefer to spend part of their wages on alcoholic drinks proves that they are capable of bearing taxation. But although a great part of the funds levied from the working-classes is drawn in this way, and another considerable part in duties on tobacco, the fact in no way diminishes the unfairness to which those classes are subject. Whether you take 7 per cent. of a man's income by taxing his customary beverage and one of his few comforts, or

published), we get 10,364,000 as the number of families, each including one adult male.

Dividing the first figure by the second we find that the indirect taxation paid by each of those families will be £5 17s. *od.*

INCIDENCE OF TAXATION, 1900-1.

	£	Paid in taxes on com- modities.			In Income- tax at 1s. in the £, with abatements.			In other taxes.			Total.			Per cent.
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
A family														
income of 85	85	5	17	0	—			—			5	17	0	6·9
„ „ 200	200	5	17	0	2	0	0	1	6	8	9	3	8	4·6
„ „ 500	500	5	17	0	17	10	0	11	13	4	35	0	4	7·0
„ „ 5,000	5,000	5	17	0	250	0	0	166	13	4	422	10	4	8·4

whether you take it by a direct income-tax, makes no difference to the burden. He is equally the poorer by 7 per cent. He may not, indeed, be so conscious of the tax, but the economic sacrifice he is called upon to make is precisely the same in the one case as it would be in the other.

In order to lower this percentage to a rate more fair in comparison with the taxation imposed on the wealthier classes, in order also to repeal taxes that now fall on the very poorest, Liberals have long advocated a "Free Breakfast Table." As soon as the condition of the national finances allows, they would abolish the duty on tea, cocoa and similar articles, as well as the new duty on sugar. Even such sweeping reductions, however, would only lower the percentage of working-class taxation from 6·9 to 6·2 ; and if—a very distant hope—it were found possible to go to such lengths as to lower the tobacco duty by one-half, the working-man would still be paying to the State 5·5 per cent. of his wages. With a view therefore to establishing a reasonable scale of graduation, as well as to make good the loss falling on the Exchequer through this first reform, it will be necessary not only to lower the taxes on the smaller incomes but also to raise them on the higher. The only effective means to that end would be to graduate the income-tax.

A graduated income-tax is a proposal faced by one serious difficulty. At present three-fourths of the income-tax is "collected at the source," is deducted by companies, tenants of houses and employers from the dividends, rents and salaries which they pay, and is sent to the tax-collectors by them, and not by the income-receivers. If each man's tax was at a different rate according to the amount of income he received, it is said that this system would no longer be possible ; an inquisition would be necessary into every person's yearly receipts, and this would lead to annoyance, to fraud, and to heavy expense of collection. But it may be pointed out, on the other hand, that the tax is already carefully graduated in England on incomes below £700 a

year,¹ and that graduated systems of income-tax have been successfully established in Prussia and many other of the German States, in Austria, Sweden, Denmark and Switzerland, in the towns of Holland and Belgium, and in Victoria, South Australia and New Zealand.² If in England the obstacle has been overcome in the case of the smaller incomes, and if elsewhere it has been found possible to carry out the plan in its completeness, it is difficult to believe that this obstacle can really be so insuperable as is often supposed.

But it is not this technical objection which mainly inspires the opposition to a graduated income-tax. The chief opposition springs from the fear that such a tax may be used as a weapon of extortion against the rich. What are to be the rates of graduation? Are they to rise to 30 or 50 per cent. on the highest incomes? Once the principle is established you cannot tell, it is said, to what lengths a democratic Parliament might

¹ Income.	Abatement on which no tax is levied.	Taxed income.	Tax paid at 1s. in the £.	Percentage of total income paid as tax.
£	£	£	£ s. d.	
150	160	0	0	0
250	160	90	4 10 0	1·8
350	160	190	9 10 0	2·7
450	150	300	15 0 0	3·3
550	120	430	21 10 0	3·9
650	70	580	29 0 0	4·5
Above 700	0	—	—	5·0

It is interesting to note that an income-tax graduated from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 per cent. was levied in England as early as 1435 and again in 1449–50. (Seligman, *Progressive Taxation in Theory and Practice*, published by the American Economic Association, 1894, p. 17.)

² Seligman, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 34–59; Coghlan, *Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia*, 1900, pp. 780, 782; Hon. W. P. Reeves, *The Long White Cloud*, p. 375.

In South Australia the tax is graduated only on incomes below £800.

not go; and if the larger incomes were taxed at rates such as these, a gross injustice would be committed against the more enterprising and successful business and professional men—the few would be robbed for the advantage of the many. And the advantage to the many would be short-lived. For people would have less inducement to work in order to win large incomes if the State took from them a third or a half of their earnings; with fewer large incomes less capital would be saved; with a smaller accumulated capital the industry of the country would be starved, and a decline of industries could not fail to react with disastrous results on all classes of the nation.

Such an objection, however, can be made against almost any form of taxation. If Parliament wished to be extortionate, the present income-tax could be raised to ten shillings in the pound, or the Death Duties to twenty shillings in the pound. The proposal now made contemplates no exorbitant rates. It would redress an old injustice. It would not impose a new one. The sense of fairness in the nation, and the self-interest of the people themselves, can be trusted not to impose exaggerated burdens on the higher incomes.¹ If the graduation does no more—and this, it must be emphasized, is all that is suggested—than to secure a real equality of burden, and to demand the same sacrifices from men of large means as it demands from men of moderate means, the inducement to save would in no way be lessened, and the wealthier classes would be treated with no unfairness; they would rather themselves be guilty of gross injustice towards the majority if by their opposition they succeeded in preventing so reasonable and necessary a change.

An exact equality of sacrifice we can indeed never hope to secure. Taxation cannot be measured out among large bodies of men with the accuracy of a precision balance. Under the most perfect arrange-

¹ We shall discuss this point further when we come to deal with the general objections advanced against democracy. See pp. 234-238.

ments possible to devise, grievances of some kind will certainly be found. But they may be less gross than the grievances now accruing. Only when, on the one hand, the duties on the "breakfast table" have been repealed, and on the other hand, the ingenuity of some Chancellor of the Exchequer has been able to devise a practicable form of graduated income-tax, will an approach be made to a just system of taxation, and our national revenue be levied on those principles which, not Liberals alone, but almost all students of public finance, agree to regard as equitable.

We turn lastly to a subject which possesses a very close, though not always a pleasant, interest for all classes of the nation—to "the rates."

If the taxes have been increasing rapidly, and the tax-payers are beginning to murmur, the rates have been increasing even more rapidly, and the rate-payers' complaints have long been clamorous.¹ The existing springs

¹	1871	1881	1891	Latest year for which figures have been published.	Increase per cent., latest year over 1871.	Increase per cent., latest year over 1891.
Rateable Value. England & Wales. Millions of £.	107	135	152	(1900) 175	63·5	15·1
Amount raised by Local Rates. Millions of £.	16·4 ²	23·3	27·8	(1898-9) 38·6	135·4	38·8

² This is the figure for 1867-8, the figure for 1871 not being available. It includes a comparatively small sum received by local authorities for profits on water and gas undertakings, which were not stated separately in the early returns.

Almost the whole of this growth of rates has fallen on the towns. It has taken place in spite of large subventions from the national Exchequer to the local revenues, amounting in 1900-1, or the whole of the United Kingdom, to over fourteen millions.

of local revenue in the towns seem to be tapped nearly, or quite, to their fullest capacity; every undertaking, however useful, is bitterly opposed if it involves expenditure; the difficulty of obtaining funds hinders many of those social reforms with which the local authorities are charged; and, if School Boards are to improve education, if Boards of Guardians are to grant relief to the deserving on an adequate scale, if Town Councils and the London County Council are to attack the causes of ill-health and are to improve mean surroundings, it is of urgent importance to provide these bodies with new sources of local revenue. To this end the Rating of Land Values is proposed, and for these reasons has been given a prominent place among the practical aims of the Liberal party.

The Rating of Land Values is a reform that is usually treated as single, but which, carefully examined, may be seen to be really supported on two separate grounds, to be founded on two separate principles, and to need, in all probability, two separate measures to carry it fully into effect.

In the first place it is advocated for the reason that there is a constant increase in the value of town land; an increase which is due, not to any efforts on the part of the owners, but to the growth of population and wealth, and to the activities of the community at large. It rests on the principle that whatever the community directly creates, the community has a right to keep. From this standpoint the reform would naturally take the shape of a special rate on the unearned increment on land rising in value.

In the second place it is advocated for the reason that the owners of all urban land, whether their land be rising in value or not, are now allowed to escape with less than their fair share of local burdens. From this point of view the proposal rests on the principle that all who benefit from expenditure should pay towards revenue, and in proportion to their ability to pay. It would involve a new rate on all site values.

To avoid confusion it will be best to treat, with such

brevity as we are compelled to use, these two aspects of the question as distinct subjects.

The population of the towns of Great Britain is increasing in numbers at the rate of some four millions every ten years. New houses in which to live, new factories in which to work, new shops and offices for their trade, are needed by these added millions. Large areas of land must therefore be constantly taken from agriculture to be used for building, yielding through the change considerably higher rents to the owners. Side by side with the growth of population comes a growth, even more rapid, of wealth. We find a larger number of people, with fuller purses, competing to obtain houses and offices in the quarters of each town most agreeable for living or most profitable for business; the demand for land in those quarters of the towns continually increasing, while the supply remains the same, these rents also inevitably rise. Here, then, are the two main causes of the growth of land value that has long been proceeding.

Every prosperous city will supply instances. In London reliable figures prove that not less than £210,000 is added every year to the letting value of the land. One case, which chanced to come under notice, shows that a certain property consisting of a house with large grounds in one of the suburbs, formerly yielding £750 a year in rent, yielded for the site alone, when the land was cut up into small plots and built upon, no less than £3,600, or about five times as much as before. In Glasgow, a site in the centre of the city was sold by the Corporation towards the end of the eighteenth century for £800; not long ago the same site was re-purchased by the Corporation for the purpose of erecting a new Town Hall; included in the purchase were a few buildings, but of no great value; the price which had to be paid, instead of £800, was £175,000. In Harrogate, a field of five acres, rated when used for agriculture at £26 a year, was recently bought by the Town Council; the price, fixed by arbitration, was £16,678, equivalent

to an annual rental of over £600.¹ Every reader will probably be able to add similar instances from his own knowledge. Now under these circumstances a very simple, but a very important question cannot fail to present itself—To whom is it that these immense increments in value rightfully belong?

If a landowner has himself built roads, laid down drains or made other improvements on his property, a part of any increase in its value is clearly due to his own expenditure, and his title to that part is beyond challenge. The advocates of the reform we are considering invariably admit the justice of this claim. They agree that such improvements should be excluded from the scope of any rate specially levied on increments of land value. But it is self-evident that the remainder, which is almost always by far the greater part of these increments, can be due to no expenditure, to no labour, to no effort of any kind on the part of the owners of the soil.

The marshes by the Thames where the city of London now stands, the moors and bare hills on which many of the great northern towns have been built, the meadows and the fields of corn over which the industrial cities spread out their "long, unlovely streets"—to whom is due the immense value that attaches to these? The

¹ London : Rateable value of property, 1871-2 .	£19,650,743
Value in 1897-8, a careful allowance being made for new buildings, which are excluded from this estimate	£25,131,840
Increase in site-value in 26 years .	£5,481,097
Increase per annum	£210,811

(Memorandum presented to the Royal Commission on Local Taxation by Mr. G. L. Gomme, Statistical Officer of the London County Council. See Part II. p. 264 of Appendix to vol. i. of *Evidence before the Commission*.)

The individual case in London is quoted from *The Housing Question*, by Alfred Smith, L.C.C., late Chairman of L.C.C. Housing Committee, p. 49. The Glasgow, Widnes and Harrogate instances are supplied by informants in those towns.

site in Glasgow sold for £800 and bought back after the lapse of a century for £175,000—was it the labour and enterprise of its owners that account for this increase? It is the community alone which has created these values. The existence of large populations in the towns, the enterprise of manufacturers, the labour of workmen, the growth of numbers, the competition for sites, these are the causes that have made the soil more valuable. A town is a firm of two partners. One is active, conducts the whole of the business, provides the whole of the capital. The other is a sleeping partner, and a sleeping partner of an unusual kind, for he not only gives no labour to promote the interests of the firm, but he furnishes not a penny of its capital. Yet the second is allowed to take a share, and a large and increasing share, of the profits which are wholly earned by the effort, the skill and the expenditure of the other. The community works and the landowner appropriates.

[If each individual has a right to enjoy the fruits of his own labour, the same individuals, united together as a body of citizens, have a precisely equal right to claim, through the council that represents them, the wealth which by their common efforts they have themselves created.]

Such a claim, it must be admitted however, can hardly be retrospective. Large numbers of private persons, of Friendly Societies, of insurance companies, of corporations of all kinds, have invested money in what are termed "improved ground rents," in securities, that is, which represent this very increment in the value of urban land. It would be found impossible in practice, even if it were just, to confiscate this money. We are obliged therefore to recognize, however reluctantly, that through the gross neglect of Parliament in previous generations in failing to ear-mark this increase of value for public purposes, the unearned increment that has grown up in the past is lost to the State. Whatever proposals are made must, it is generally admitted by Liberals, be limited to the future. To see that through no apathy of this

generation shall our successors suffer the same loss as that of which we have ourselves such bitter reason to complain, this is the duty that now devolves on the State.

"Suppose," wrote John Stuart Mill,¹ "that there is a kind of income which constantly tends to increase, without any exertion or sacrifice on the part of the owners. . . . In such a case it would be no violation of the principles on which private property is grounded, if the State should appropriate this increase of wealth, or part of it, as it arises. This would not properly be taking anything from anybody; it would merely be applying an accession of wealth, created by circumstances, to the benefit of society, instead of allowing it to become an unearned appendage to the riches of a particular class. Now this is actually the case with rent. The ordinary progress of a society which increases in wealth, is at all times tending to augment the incomes of landlords. . . . They grow richer, as it were in their sleep, without working, risking, or economizing. What claim have they, on the general principle of social justice, to this accession of riches? . . . From the present date, or any subsequent time at which the legislature may think fit to assert the principle, I see no objection to declaring that the future increment of rent should be liable to special taxation; in doing which all injustice would be obviated, if the present market-price of their land were secured to them; since that includes the present value of all future expectations." In 1848 this was written. Had Mill's advice been followed at the time, a princely revenue, drawn without injustice and without hardship, would now be filling the local treasuries instead of going, as it has been allowed to go, to swell the fortunes of individual owners and of private investors.

Possibly, probably even, in the course of the twentieth century, the rentals of the town lands of Great Britain will be doubled, for the population, at the present rate of growth, will be more than doubled in the hundred years. Whether this colossal increment shall also be lost to the

¹ *Principles of Political Economy*, Bk. V. ch. ii. § 5.

community is the urgent question that now arises; and every year that passes without action being taken means a sacrifice by the nation of at least half a million of revenue which is rightfully its own. If the errors of the past cannot be retrieved, they can serve at least as a beacon to warn. Reformers earnestly urge that without delay a valuation should be made of the urban and quasi-urban land, and that wherever this valuation is found in the future to rise through the greater demand for building sites, apart from expenditure or labour on the part of the owners, as large a part of this increase as it may be found expedient to take should be claimed by the State, by means of a special rate, and be drawn to increase the local revenues that are now so insufficient to cover legitimate public needs.

We turn to the second branch of the subject.

That the owners of land values benefit by the expenditure of rates is clear. If no public money were spent on the towns, there would be no proper system of roads, of sewers, of lights in the streets, of police supervision. Without these services, the towns as we know them could hardly have come into existence. Great conglomerations of people would be impossible; men would be unable to carry on business for want of communications; they would be decimated by epidemics; they would be the helpless victims of crime; the nation would now be dwelling in villages, and squalid villages at that; and the rental of the soil built upon would be little above its agricultural value. No rates, therefore, would mean small rents. But if the owners of land values benefit from many forms of local expenditure they may justly be called upon to defray a share of that expenditure. It is equally clear that the contributions asked from them ought to be according to their ability to pay, since this is the first maxim of taxation. And it is an accepted principle that ability to pay, so far as local taxation is concerned, can only be measured by the value of the land and houses owned or occupied in the particular locality;

because, in the first place, you cannot tax in proportion to the benefit received, for here also it is impossible to estimate the benefit derived by each person ; and in the second place it is held impracticable to rate men on their total incomes, for their incomes may be, and usually are, drawn from many localities, and you cannot tell what proportion of them should be rated in each place. The owners of land values, therefore, ought to be rated towards those expenses of their town that result in benefit to them, in proportion to the amount of this property which they enjoy. So much is obvious. But whether they do as a matter of fact bear their just share of these burdens is by no means obvious ; is a question, indeed, which has given rise to a long and very complicated controversy.

That land values are now rated is unquestionable. When property is assessed for the purposes of rating, not only the value of the buildings is taken into account, but also the value of the site on which they stand. But there is much doubt who it is that really pays the rates levied on the latter.

The rate-collector sends in a demand-note to the person who occupies the house, and he makes the actual payment.¹ It is urged, however, on behalf of the land-owners, that if the rates were not collected from the occupier he would be able to pay a rent higher in proportion. A man who takes a house considers how much he will have to pay in rent and rates together, and if the rates are heavy he will refuse to give so much in rent. Consequently the burden of the rates on site value really falls in the long run upon the landowner, although it seems to the occupier that it is he who bears it. It is answered on the other hand that, supposing all local expenditure had been defrayed from the beginning by the national Exchequer, there is no reason whatever to believe that ground-rents would be so much the higher ;

¹ Except in the case of small tenements and cottages where the collection is made from the house-owner for reasons of convenience. But this does not greatly affect the incidence of the tax.

that the supply of land and its demand are the main factors in fixing rents ; that rates, when they are normal in amount, really affect the matter very slightly, and that almost always the occupier does pay the rates in reality as well as in appearance.

A Royal Commission was recently appointed to examine the subject of Local Taxation. Finding itself in difficulties on the question of the incidence of rates, this Commission modestly sought the views of the leading English economists. It drafted indeed an examination paper on the subject, and set a number of university professors to answer it. Mr. Anstey's dream in *Vice Versâ* was for the first time realized in actual life. But the humour of this proceeding was its only satisfactory feature, for in the replies that were returned, every possible view on the subject was expressed with equal force and defended with equal ability. We may be certain that the professors have never received answers to the questions they have themselves set in the schools, which showed a more bewildering diversity of opinion than those they sent to the Royal Commission.¹ Fortunately, however, this is one of those rare cases in which much the same conclusion

¹ Professor Sidgwick and Professor Marshall say that the real burden of the rates is divided between the owner and the occupier. Mr. Leonard Courtney says that the occupier, except in a few cases, bears the whole of it. Sir Robert Giffen holds that it is the ground-landlord who pays. Professor Bastable says that the owners pay any rates that are above the usual amount levied in other similar localities, the occupier paying all the rest. Professor Gonner expresses no definite view, but suggests that the burden is divided. Mr. Cannan's opinion is too vague to be tabulated. Mr. L. L. Price thinks that the burden is divided, but probably falls mainly on the occupier. Mr. Blunden thinks it falls wholly on the owner. Mr. Sargant says that it is divided. Mr. Gomme says that it falls on the owner. Sir Edward Hamilton says that the rates are partly paid by the landowner and partly by the occupier, but cannot fix the proportion ; and Lord Farrer agrees with him. (*Memoranda on the Classification and Incidence of Imperial and Local Taxes*, 1899, pp. 46, 67, 89, 97, 104, 120, 141, 153, 181, 190, 212, 242.)

Adam Smith and Ricardo hold that the burden is divided, but in what proportion is doubtful. (Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. V. ch. ii. ; Ricardo, *Political Economy*, ch. xiv.) [P.T.O.]

may be drawn no matter which of the conflicting premises be accepted.

For if the owners, as many of them contend, already pay the rates indirectly in the shape of deductions from rent, then it can make no difference to them if, when new leases are made, Parliament were to require that they should be rated directly. The landowners can have no reason to object to the change ; while from the standpoint of public progress there is a strong reason for enforcing it ; for the present ratepayers relieved of a grievance, even though the grievance be unreal, will be less strong in their opposition to those forms of municipal effort that demand expenditure. If, secondly—and this is the view that the greater number of authorities support—the burden is in some way divided, then surely it is best that the State should raise its local funds directly from the persons whom it intends to tax, and not leave to uncertain and unequal economic movements the partition of a burden which the State wishes to divide. “A tax tends to stick where it falls,” and both on the ground of fairness and in order to get rid of the occupier’s resistance to reform, it is advisable to follow the plain rule of levying rates on those who are intended to pay them. But if we take the third view—that the occupier does pay, first and last, the whole of the rates—then there is here a gross injustice urgently needing remedy ; the occupiers alone will be bearing an expenditure from which the owners as well as themselves draw large benefits. Into the intricacies of this question it is unnecessary therefore for us to enter. Whichever view of the incidence of urban rates be taken, the justice and the necessity of imposing a special rate on site values remains established, and those who are interested to probe the matter to its

Mill holds that the occupier pays so much of the rate as falls on the value of the house itself ; the owner the rest. (J. S. Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, Bk. V. ch. iii. §§ 2 and 6.)

Most of these writers explain that their opinions are not meant to apply to shops and other trade premises, the rates on which may largely fall on the customers who purchase the goods made or sold there.

deeper recesses may be referred for further arguments to other sources.¹

This reform has recently received the support of some important allies. In the Royal Commission on Local Taxation serious differences of opinion prevailed on the question of the rating of land values. The Commission consisted of fifteen members; nine reported against the proposal; one member signed a separate report in favour of the proposal in its extremest form; the remaining five, who; it may be said, formed by far the most authoritative section—the member of the Conservative Cabinet who was chairman of the Commission, Sir Edward Hamilton and Sir George Murray the two experts who represented the Treasury, Lord Blair Balfour, a Scottish lawyer of great distinction, and Mr. James Stuart—gave the weight of their high authority to an emphatic endorsement of this reform.² The Association of Municipal Corporations,

¹ See W. J. Dawson, *The Unearned Increment* (Sonnenschein). Sidney Webb, *The London Programme*, ch. xvi. (Sonnenschein).

J. Fletcher Moulton, K.C., M.P., *The Taxation of Ground Values* (a pamphlet to be obtained from the Land Law Reform Association, 18 Cockspur Street, London, S.W.).

B. F. C. Costelloe, L.C.C., *The Incidence of Taxation* (Ward and Foxlow, 113 Church Street, London, N.W.).

Professor W. Smart, *The Taxation of Land Values and the Single Tax* (MacLehose).

The Ratepayer and the Landowner (a pamphlet published by the Land Law Reform Association).

The Great Problem of our Great Towns, published by the *Echo*, 22 Catherine Street, Strand, London, W.C.

The reports on this subject of the Local Government and Taxation Committee of the London County Council, and the Publications of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, particularly the Final Report, pp. 151–177.

² In their Minority Report one argument, which for reasons of space we have not been able to discuss, is dwelt upon at some length. If a part of the rates are removed from buildings and placed upon land, the effect would be that a house and its site in the centre of a town would be more heavily rated than a similar house and its site on the outskirts of the town, because the land in the centre is always more valuable and would be assessed at a higher figure than the land in the outskirts. The result of this would be somewhat to encourage building in the suburbs; more houses, or better houses at the same rent, would be erected in the outlying

again, has resolved by an overwhelming majority in favour of the Rating of Land Values, and more than two hundred local authorities have already petitioned Parliament in the same sense.¹ The Liberal party, eager for the improvement of education, of sanitation, of the amenity of our towns, anxious that the local authorities shall not be hampered by lack of means in their efforts for social progress, sees in the rating of the unearned increment, and of urban site values in general, new forms of taxation, at once just and productive, through which, without adding further burdens to those that lie with excessive weight on the present rate-payers, the funds that are so urgently needed may be furnished by the State.

districts; the overcrowding in the central quarters would be relieved, and a further step taken towards the solution of the Housing Problem.

¹ For a list of the authorities which had thus petitioned prior to 1898, see *The Ratepayer and the Landowner*, published by the Land Law Reform Association.

CHAPTER X

THE STATE AND RELIGION

LET us recall the principle from which we started. That principle was that the State has the duty so to use its powers as to help men to live their lives worthily. It led us to a policy aimed at the promotion of education, of leisure, of health and of material comfort, and we have traced the means by which Liberals seek to carry out that policy. We now return to our first principle again, and it leads us, along another path, to the doctrine of freedom of thought.

No one would pretend that a nation's life can be satisfactory unless its opinions—on politics, religion, conduct—are sound. And its opinions are least likely to be sound if Government stereotypes whatever ideas chance to exist, and forbids or checks their natural change; they are most likely to be sound if the advocates of new ideas are allowed to express them openly and to push them unhindered by the State. ¶ A wide activity on the part of Government is held desirable in material things. In the world of thought an opposite rule holds good. There the more strictly the State abstains from action the better it will serve the progress of truth.

This principle is now recognized. In England, thanks to the victories of Liberalism in the past, the State does not seek to influence opinions; it leaves them unaided to make their way if they are true, unprotected to disappear if they are false.¶ No Galileo may be persecuted on the ground that it is heterodox and absurd to preach that the earth goes round the sun, and no Hobbes may be pensioned for teaching the people that the only right

form of government is an absolute monarchy. Freedom of thought has become an axiom of politics, seldom challenged even by the bitterest advocates of reaction.

But to this general rule there are certain exceptions. The publication of books and pictures, and the performance of plays, which incite to sexual immorality are properly forbidden, and the publication of doctrines which preach criminal violence, such as the doctrines of Anarchists, might also, no doubt, be properly forbidden ; for such measures are in defence of the very foundations on which Society is built, and there is no reasonable man who denies the harmfulness of the things suppressed. These two exceptions are held legitimate. But a third exception is made which, in the opinion of Liberals, is by no means legitimate, and it is this with which we propose now to deal.

In the matter of religion the rule of non-interference is openly disobeyed. Churches remain established by law and a denominational bias is given to the national system of education. The State steps into the arena of theological dispute ; it selects certain creeds ; it declares them to be the national religion ; it endows them with privileges ; and it gives its seal to the dogmas, the form of worship and the ecclesiastical organization which belong to those creeds and to those alone.

The bonds are very close that connect the Church of England—for Scotland is not within our present purview—with the State. Its creed and ritual are fixed by statutes ; the bishops are nominated by Ministers of State ; if new bishoprics are needed, the legislature creates them ; the heads of the Church have seats in Parliament ; the Crown summons and dismisses Convocation, and allows or vetoes its acts ; the Privy Council judges some ecclesiastical disputes ; Parliament authorizes Church tribunals to decide in others, and their decisions are enforced by the arm of the State ; the Church of England is allowed almost a monopoly of public ceremonial ; a Government Department—the

Ecclesiastical Commission—administers a large part of the property from which the funds of the Church are drawn; within the last century considerable sums have been voted from the taxes for the erection of its buildings; further, the whole of the tithes and all the ancient pious endowments are secured to it, and by the existing arrangement of educational grants, it is allowed the sole control of the primary schools in over eight thousand parishes. A connection of this kind, in a country such as England, where the people are by no means unanimous in religious belief, and in an age when religious thought is gradually taking modified forms in obedience to the growth of knowledge, can hardly fail to give rise to serious objection.

For at least one-third of the population do not belong to the Church by law established,¹ and all these have valid grounds for complaint. Every one can now see the impolicy of the old persecuting laws against Nonconformists. The Test Act, the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act have long been without defenders. But the advantage which the State now gives to certain religious opinions by granting privileges to those who hold them is hardly more legitimate than the advantage it gave to those opinions, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by persecuting those who did not hold them. Establishment stands on the same footing as repression. For the State to support the Episcopal Church by its influence is clearly no more right in principle than for the State to support the

¹ There are, of course, no statistics giving authoritative figures. If the number of marriages be taken as a test, 68·6 per cent. were, in 1897, solemnized according to the rites of the Established Church, and 31·4 per cent. otherwise. (*Report of the Registrar-General*, 1899.) But this test is unduly favourable to the Established Church, since it is well known that many persons who do not belong to it prefer to be married in its buildings. If the number of communicants be taken as a test, the Year Books of the various denominations for 1899, give 1,886,000 to the Church of England and 1,897,000 to Nonconformist bodies, not including Roman Catholics, Jews, Quakers and Unitarians. These figures, however, are thought to give an erroneous impression of an opposite kind.

Episcopal Church by its power to punish ; and when the Nonconformist, convinced that his own doctrines are for the greatest advantage of mankind, and eager to win over his fellow-countrymen to his communion, finds himself handicapped by unequal laws, when he finds that the State declares the adherents of a rival creed to be of the national faith and those who dissent from it to be heterodox, when he finds that the immense advantage of financial power is given to his opponents by a monopoly of the old endowments—he feels that his creed suffers an injustice, not indeed as severe, yet the same in kind, as the injustice done to dissent before the days of toleration.

And the grievances that come from Establishment are not only Nonconformist grievances. The Churchman who wishes to see the Church reformed has also grounds for complaint ; for he finds that he can effect little or nothing without setting the cumbrous machinery of legislation to work, and securing for his reforms the support, not only of the ecclesiastical body, but also of the secular State.

Now the Liberal politician joins hands in this matter with the Nonconformist and with the progressive Churchman simply on the ground that for the State, in a country such as ours, to interfere in any way with the development of religious doctrine is wrong in principle. It is not a question of his own religious views. It is not a question of the value he attaches to the work done by the Established Church. He may be among the most loyal of her adherents. He may admire, as fully as they deserve to be admired, the fine devotion of her clergy, the energy which large numbers of them throw into the task of social improvement, the invaluable services rendered by her parish organizations. The opposition of the Liberal, as a Liberal, to Establishment rests, not on ecclesiastical, but on strictly political grounds. It is the fact that inequality exists, that the State goes beyond its proper duties by giving a bias to national thought in matters of religion, that leads Liberalism to condemn Establishment.

Surely it should be clear that the State is, by its nature, wholly unsuited to touch the vexed questions of theology.

The State may teach grammar because there is a recognized system of grammar which no educated Englishman disputes. It may fix a sanitary standard for house-building, for the rules of sanitation are admitted. It may punish crimes against person and property, for the nature of crime may be defined on unchallenged principles and its harmfulness is not a matter of doubt. It may be active in promoting material comfort, because every one knows in what material comfort consists. But the nature of religious truth, the question whether Christianity alone among all the faiths of civilized mankind embodies it, the right dogmas, organization and ritual of a Christian Church, these high subjects have been the centre of eager disputes among the keenest and loftiest intellects ever since metaphysical inquiry first began and since the religion of Christ was first propounded. No Church commands unanimous support. What, then, are the British Crown and Parliament, what title have they to philosophical learning and theological certitude, that they should sit in judgment and declare the decisions? The State includes the whole nation, but a Church, in fact if not in theory, includes only a part, and it is this which makes them bad partners.

In the days when kings claimed, and peoples admitted, a divine right to rule, it was reasonable to believe that the sovereign had a right, equally divine, to determine questions of faith, and to propagate his own creed by whatever means were at hand. The principle "*cujus regio ejus religio*," that the country should follow the religion of the prince, had then a logical foundation. But the modern theory of politics, deriving all authority from the people and allowing the Government no higher divinity than dwells in the nation of which it is the agent, refuses to look upon the State as a depositary of religious truth, and denies that either its constitution or its character entitles it to select among the competing

theologies, and point out to its members the school of divinity which may rightly claim their support.

Who now-a-days would dream of submitting the points at issue between Catholic and Protestant, High Churchman and Low Churchman, Trinitarian and Unitarian, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, to the judgment of a Royal Commission, and asking Parliament to declare the decisions in a statute? One might as well propose that Parliament should decide the matters in dispute between various schools of philosophy, or that a Select Committee should fix the canons of art or determine the laws of physical science. The members of a Cabinet are not theologians. The House of Commons is not a synod. Liberals attack the principle of Establishment because they hold that the well-founded complaints to which it gives rise, are the natural results of an overstepping by the State of the bounds of its proper jurisdiction.

“The Church Defence Institution” and its friends have many pleas, however, to urge in answer.

It is said, first, that a secular State argues a godless nation, and that Disestablishment would be a declaration of national apostasy. Liberals reply that this is to suppose a people and its government to be the same, and that individuals can have no religion unless the Parliament professes it by statute. It is as though we were to pretend—if the simile be allowed for the sake of illustration—that a people becomes musical when a national opera-house is built, and cannot be musical without one. On this supposition pious ordinances are piety, a ritual commanded by Parliament is the same as a faith enshrined in the consciences of the people; and, however immoral and sordid the citizens may be, a country is godly if the State connects itself with some Church; however moral and devout they are, it is ungodly if the connection be absent. An argument which would lead to the conclusion that the English nation in the reign of Charles II. was pious and that the American nation at the present time is not, can hardly claim support from common-sense.

Secondly, a strong appeal is made to sentiment. The antiquity of the Church, her great traditions, the glamour and dignity she lends to the State, the deep affections that are entwined around her, these, it is said, should entitle her to keep the position she holds. But antiquity and charm, powerful defences though they are, cannot be regarded as final arguments when serious practical injury is done. A cathedral is most beautiful when it is left unrestored; but the fact was not allowed to carry the day when the façade of Peterborough was found to be insecure and dangerous to life and limb. The monarchy of the Stuarts was more picturesque than that of the Hanoverians, but sensible men in the eighteenth century were not led by this to join the Jacobites and agree to despotism. M. Grévy or M. Loubet are less attractive figures than Francis I. or Louis XIV., but we do not think highly of those Frenchmen who would on that account sacrifice liberty by reverting to the old *régime*. If, as in this case, grave injustice occurs, if large sections of the nation are stamped with the stamp of religious inferiority and obstacles are raised against the free development of thought, stronger reasons are needed to stop the hand of reform than those which sentiment supplies.

Next it is said that disestablishment is closely coupled with disendowment, and disendowment would be open robbery; the Church has an indefeasible right to all the property she now enjoys; this part of the policy must be rejected as flagrantly unjust, and the other part must needs fall with it. In answer Liberals deny that this indefeasible right exists. There has been much controversy as to the real origins of the ancient property of the Church, but the point is one to which less importance seems now to be attached. Whether the tithes and Church lands were voluntarily given by the Saxon thanes and their successors in the lordship of the soil, or whether they were received from the hands of the kings or other public authority, is seen to be a matter somewhat beside the mark. The issue appears rather to depend on the question whether these properties, by

whomsoever given, were intended to maintain for all time and through all changes of conditions the clergy of a particular denomination, or whether they were meant to provide for the public worship of the whole people, "the spiritual culture of the nation" in Mill's words, and for the benefit of all the poor. Now if the great majority of the nation, 99 per cent. let us say, were to secede from the Episcopal Church, no one could believe that the intentions of the endowers would be fulfilled if all of these were denied any share in the use of this property; it would be held absurd that the whole of the six or eight million pounds a year, at which the income of the Church is variously estimated, should be retained by the handful who still adhered to her. So much must be conceded; but what then becomes of the doctrine of indefeasible right? And if that doctrine do not apply in the case of our supposed secession of 99 per cent., does it not equally fail in the case of the actual secession of 30 or 40 per cent.? No one proposes to alienate the lands and the money which have been given to the Church of England in times since other denominations were in active existence, for these gifts must be supposed to have been deliberately meant for the benefit of that Church alone as distinct from others. And prescription forbids that the ancient ecclesiastical buildings should be turned to other than their present uses, or uses closely akin to them. But a large proportion of the remaining temporalities—how large a proportion being a matter for separate discussion—is held, in the opinion of those who take the anti-establishment view, on no valid title; they may be recalled, and should in justice be recalled, by the State for other purposes.

Lastly, it is said that, whether the Church has an absolute right to her property or not, it would be a mistake in policy to take any part of it from her. The Church is a great influence for social progress; she is the chief guardian of national morality; the education of the people would be imperfect indeed if it were limited to the arts and sciences, languages and literatures,

and included no teaching in moral principles; the clergyman is needed to supplement the school-master; the Church has the same claim on the goodwill of the State as the School; and to weaken her work by a measure of disendowment, if not unjust, would certainly be inexpedient. By some Liberals the force of this argument is so fully admitted that they would separate disestablishment from disendowment and support the one while abandoning the other. But others—who are probably the majority—meet it, not indeed by minimizing the importance of moral teaching, for that would be to contradict the whole spirit of Liberal policy; but by denying that any appreciable harm to moral teaching would be done by disendowment. Only a part of the funds of the Church are in question. There are many ways in which economies could be made in her expenditure without hurting her work. If these were not enough to make good the loss, her members are the wealthiest part of the nation, and were it necessary to ask for larger voluntary gifts, the zeal of her sons is not so small that they would allow her to lack for means. Nonconformity is vigorous and its moral influence powerful, yet it has no large endowments. Indeed, if the Church were freed from the clogging control of the State, the new independence would be likely so to stimulate the devotion of her clergy and laity that her activity would become greater and her work more efficient than ever before; a forecast which has experience to support it, for such, it is well known, was the result in Ireland when the Episcopal Church was disestablished and partly disendowed.¹ Not only in Ireland, but in all the self-

¹ The Irish precedent is of the greatest interest. Before the Irish Church was separated from the State there were numberless predictions from its friends “of financial failure, of weakened moral power, and of hopeless internal divisions.” The Archbishop of Armagh, for instance, declared that over the greater part of the island disendowment would mean nothing short of extinction. The Act was passed in the face of the fiercest opposition. It came into force in 1871. In 1875, *The Christian Observer* declared that “a new life seems to have been breathed into the slumbering Church. . . . The most remarkable fruit of disestablishment is,

governing colonies of the British Empire, and in the United States as well, there are no State churches; yet everywhere the peoples maintain religious organizations fully sufficient for their needs, and nowhere have the predicted disasters to national morality been found to occur.

None of these arguments, then, can be accepted as

unquestionably, the impulse it has given, not merely to the reforming zeal, but to the organizing and legislative activity of the most eminent aristocratic, professional, and mercantile laymen of Ireland." In 1880, *The Record*, the organ of the Evangelical party in England, wrote, "Disestablishment has rather quickened than extinguished spiritual life in Ireland. The activity that exists in every department of the Irish Church is indicative of vigorous existence." In 1881, *The Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* said, "It is wonderful what Irish Churchmen have done during the past ten years for their Church—certainly more than for hundreds of years previous—cathedrals built or restored; churches built, rebuilt, and adorned; glebe houses erected all over the country." In 1882, *The Church Times* declared that "there is more life, more true activity, more even of Church feeling and Church doctrine, visible in Ireland now than at any time since the Reformation." In 1892, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin said, "When I count up the advantages which have followed disestablishment . . . and when I try to hold the balance evenly and weigh the losses and the gains of the whole, I say boldly and without reserve that in my opinion at least, the gain outweighs the loss. . . . It has, undoubtedly, proved to have been for the good of our Church that it has been thrown upon its own resources." (See *The Case for Disestablishment*, published by the Liberation Society, pp. 241-245.)

To give two more recent opinions, in 1898 Colonel Saunderson, M.P., declared—

"The Irish Church had received, as they thought, a very sad blow twenty-eight years ago, when it was disestablished, and disendowed, and separated from the Church of England. Although he voted against the measure at the time, yet, if he could, he would now undo that vote, for he believed the Irish Church at the present moment was stronger and more spiritual than it ever was before." (Speech at Dublin, October 7, 1898.)

And the Bishop of Limerick said recently—

"I feel happy in being able to throw in my lot with those who, taking a practical view of the state of the Irish Church before Disestablishment, and of her condition at present, see clearly that her gains, following on her freedom from State control, far outweigh her losses. And I feel assured that if the members of our Church, as a body, were called upon to give their opinion on the subject, it would be more in favour of our latter than of our former condition." (*Church Times*, Dec. 15, 1899.)

sound. | A nation may be godly though its State be secular | a system, if injurious, is open to reform although it be ancient and full of charm ; not all the revenues of the Church are held on a valid title ; and moral forces will be at least as powerful when all the churches are on an equal footing, and the greatest is no longer hindered in its development by the rigid confinement of State control.

No doubt this question is not of such urgent importance that it should be given precedence over the various social problems that cry out for settlement. It may be long before it becomes prominent in the political field. But whether its turn comes soon or late, (Liberals hold that the best interests of the nation will not be fully served until Government abandons its attempt to influence men in the choice of their religious communion, until it ceases to meddle with the free growth of religious thought, and recognizing that its nature is secular, throws off the ecclesiastical dress that suits it so ill.)

Another matter has to be discussed in this connection. It is the question of the Voluntary Schools. In the sphere of education also, sectarian privilege has been allowed to enter.

Three courses are open to a State faced by religious differences among its citizens. It may support no Church ; it may support all churches ; or it may support one. The English system of primary schools is supposed to combine the first two of these courses. The Board Schools belong to no Church ; the religious teaching in them is meant to embody the points to which all sects agree. The Voluntary Schools belong to all churches ; each teaches the creed of its founders, and all are helped indiscriminately by the State. But the practice has not been made to square with the theory, and in very many places the State is, as a matter of fact, supporting the educational system of one church to the exclusion of others.

There are many towns and villages where the population is too small to need, and too poor to maintain, more than one school. It would seem obviously right that in

such places the single school should be a Board School, under the control of all the rate-payers, without regard to denomination, and teaching those religious doctrines which are common to all the sects. But when the Education Act of 1870 was passed, it was found impossible to adopt this plan. The Church which was the richest and most powerful had already built large numbers of schools in such places; it refused to surrender them; it refused even to limit its operations to the ground it already held. So the right of supplying education to the parishes then unprovided was thrown open to scramble. The wealth of the Church of England enabled her easily to defeat her rivals, and in over eight thousand villages and small towns the only school available for the children is a Church school.¹

These schools have been avowedly founded for the purpose of inculcating the doctrines of the Established Church, and they are naturally pervaded by a sectarian atmosphere. Yet every Nonconformist and Catholic child is compelled by law to attend them. Four-fifths of their cost is borne by the taxes to which all sects contribute.² Yet they are controlled by self-elected com-

¹ Confusion sometimes arises from the fact that many of these schools are called National Schools. They have this name, of course, because they have been founded by "The Incorporated National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church." They are not national in the sense of being built by or belonging to the nation.

	£
² Total income of Church Schools	4,345,000
Amount of this total granted by the Government . . .	3,407,000
Voluntary contributions	624,000
Endowments.	123,000

The small balance is made up by school pence, etc. (*Board of Education Return of Statistics of Elementary Schools, 1901, p. 89.*)

The voluntary contributions and endowments form 21·6 per cent. of the total.

It should not be forgotten, moreover, that many of these "voluntary contributions" are really payments made by railway companies, or other large rate-payers, in order to preserve these schools and to prevent the establishment of Board Schools. These subscribers know that a Board School rate would probably cost them more than the amount of their present subscriptions.

mittees, and the public, who provide sixteen shillings out of every pound of their cost, are allowed no share whatever in their local management. For a Nonconformist to be given a seat on these committees is very rare. For a Nonconformist to be given an appointment as teacher or as pupil-teacher is almost unknown.

Nor are these the only grievances to which the system gives rise. In two-thirds of the country, Board Schools and Voluntary Schools exist side by side, and those who wish the children to be given denominational teaching have not only to pay the School Board rate, but to subscribe to the schools of their sect as well. Their position is much the same as that of the Dissenters in the days of Church Rates, whom conscience compelled to give to the chapel, and law compelled to give also to the church.

Even this is not all. These voluntary contributions, though sometimes a heavy charge on individuals, are often not large enough to make up an income for the schools sufficient to keep them at a high standard of efficiency. The sectarian schools are continually pinched for means; they fall short in the number and capacity of their teaching staff and in the suitability of their buildings and apparatus. The State, in fact, allows schools to be inferior if only they are sectarian as well.¹

1	In Board Schools.			In Voluntary Schools.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Average sum spent yearly on the education of each child, in all districts.....	2	17	8	2	6	5
Ditto ditto in London and County Boroughs only	3	3	11	2	6	10
Average amount per scholar spent on teachers' salaries, in all districts.....	2	5	2	1	15	2
Ditto ditto in London and County Boroughs only.....	2	10	4	1	14	11
Percentage of teachers who are certificated.....	51 %			38 %		
Number of scholars in average attendance ...	2,201,000			2,486,000		

(See the Return already quoted, and "Schools and Scholars in 1901," the supplement to *The Schoolmaster* for June 1, 1901.)

[We cannot but admit that a system which gives to a sect a partial monopoly of national education, which grants public money without the condition of public control, which burdens private individuals with the cost of a national service, and which results in stunted teaching for a vast number of the children, pressingly needs amendment.]

The plan of reform which would, no doubt, best please the sectarian party is for the State to undertake the entire cost of the Voluntary Schools while leaving to them the entire control. Such a plan could not for a moment be entertained by Liberals. It would indeed make these schools more efficient for the purposes of education. But it is absurd to suggest that one sect should be given sole control over the management and appointments in schools which all sects would be equally taxed to maintain.

Those who combine a belief in religious equality with an earnest wish for the progress of education would be best pleased with a directly opposite change. They would desire to see School Boards established everywhere and take under their own management all the Voluntary Schools. Religious teaching would still be given ; in the day schools the doctrines common to all sects would be taught, and out of school hours, in the Sunday School and in the home the child would be instructed in the distinctive beliefs of his parents' church. Such teaching would be at least as effective as that now mechanically given by the average school-master in the ordinary class-room as a preliminary to arithmetic or drill. The financial grievance would disappear ; the monopoly would be at an end ; national education would at last become uniform. But it may be doubted whether, in the present state of political thought, so heroic a remedy is possible.

Suppose that a number of parents, the Catholics let us say, were to refuse to give up their denominational schools—and it is certain that they would so refuse ; what course should then be taken ? Should the Government close the doors by force and punish with fine or

imprisonment the parents who, for conscientious reasons, declined to allow their children to go to the new Board Schools? Such a measure would be violently resisted as a measure of persecution. Or should the Government allow the schools to continue, but withdraw all its subsidies and leave the denomination to find as best it could the means of supporting them? To do this would be to lower still further the standard of education and make the welfare of the children the scapegoat of the difficulty. Or should the Government continue its grants whenever the managers of schools refused to transfer them to the School Boards? Then the object of the scheme would be lost. So long as a large minority of the nation insists on sectarian schools you cannot close them by force. If you do not close them you must subsidize them. If you subsidize them you effect no change.

It seems probable, therefore, that when a reform is undertaken it will be of some more moderate kind. It may perhaps place the Voluntary Schools under the care of the authorities which will doubtless soon be created to control the system of primary education in each large area. It may still recognize a sectarian committee of managers for each separate school, but add to them representatives of the whole body of rate-payers or parents. It may give them a more generous financial support and insist on a higher standard of efficiency. It may allow the sects which have built the schools, have so long partly maintained them, and have managed them often with great devotion and at great sacrifice, to continue—at their own cost—the religious instruction which they prefer; but it would demand strong proofs that new denominational schools were needed before it would allow them to be built and the proper development of the School Board system to be forestalled. Some grievances, it is true, would still remain. But they would be less numerous and far less acute than the grievances in this connection of which the Nonconformists, the subscribers to the funds of Voluntary Schools, and the well-wishers of the children

who are taught in them, now have valid reason to complain.

Liberalism is often accused of a love of destruction. Especially in these matters of Church establishment and of the independence of sectarian schools is the accusation heard. Yet it is no blind iconoclasm that leads to a policy of attack. The motives that inspire it are not narrow nor are the aims in view ignoble. If Liberalism is sometimes destructive, it is only as the careful gardener is destructive who uproots the weeds and prunes the vines and cuts down the ivy in order the better to develop the fruits, and preserve the useful trees. To root up bad ideas and to cut down harmful institutions seems, to the timid, reprehensible aggression ; to braver and more thoughtful spirits it seems not less beneficent than the gardener's hoeing and pruning. There is no moral man who does not passionately long for the day when the discords of religious creeds shall cease and the forces of all the churches, unhindered by internecine conflicts, be directed in harmony against the powerful influences that make for evil. How can this come about so long as one of the sects bends its energies to keep a monopoly of the favours of the temporal State, while the others are engaged in an active political campaign to break down the monopoly, and the State itself stands by leaving the question unsolved ? Of the three principles of the great humanitarian motto, Fraternity rightly comes last because it is the child of Liberty and of Equality. There can be no feeling of brotherhood between those who are bound and those who are free, between those who are shut out and those who are favoured. Liberalism has established in England, after three centuries of bitter struggle, the principle of Religious Liberty. It seeks to establish also the principle of Religious Equality, for only then will the conditions exist from which a true Religious Fraternity may finally arise. |

PART III
THE CONSTITUTION

CHAPTER I

DEMOCRACY

THE movement of the last hundred years towards a system of full self-government has been almost wholly a Liberal movement. Liberal philosophers—Godwin, Bentham, Mill—inspired it; Liberal statesmen—Grey, Russell, Cobden, Bright, Gladstone—guided it; each successive victory over the forces of absolutism or of oligarchy was a triumph for the Liberal party. To complete the work is equally the care of the Liberals of to-day. To extend the franchise further, to abolish plural voting, to make the House of Commons more truly representative of the people and more effective for its work, to end the control of the peerage over the actions of the nation, to perfect the system of local self-government—these fill a large space among their present proposals.

The principle of democracy is supported for three reasons.¹

Self-government raises the character of a people. Men who are voters in a democratic State are likely to be better men through the mere fact of being voters in such a State. They know that they belong to a free people. They know that with them lies the final voice in guiding the destinies of their country. They feel a pride in their position. Their self-respect is strengthened, and their self-reliance encouraged. Their interests are widened. They have a reason for learning something of the spacious problems of home and foreign politics;

¹ It will be understood that the term "democracy" is not used here in the sense of republicanism.

unconsciously their minds are trained, and their knowledge is extended. If, on the contrary, the government is in the hands of a few, if the masses of the people are taught that public affairs are not their concern, that their part is only indifference and a humble submission, then they are thrown back on narrower interests, and, made to feel dependent and inferior, their whole character takes a lower tone. No one would deny that the Athenian or the Roman had higher qualities than the subject, let us say, of the Persian Empire, or that the Australian or the Swiss of to-day is superior in type to the Turk or the Russian. Nor is it only differences of race, religion and climate that account for these distinctions. Impartial students of history and observers of our own time would not hesitate to say that the influence of free institutions largely helped, or is now largely helping, to dignify the Athenian, the Roman, the Australian or the Swiss, their absence to degrade the others. Freedom is liable to misuse, no doubt, and there are nations not yet fitted to enjoy it. But universal experience shows that only where the spirit of liberty reigns can men attain their finest development.

And democracy alone is the means of ensuring that laws shall be framed in the interest of a nation as a whole, and not in the interest of a limited section.

Nowhere is this truth more clearly illustrated than in the recent history of our own country. When the constitution was in the main aristocratic, before the Reform Act of 1832, the cases were rare indeed when the grievances of the working-classes gained the ear of Parliament. From 1832 until the franchise in the towns was widely extended in 1868, the middle-class was dominant in the State, and legislation was inspired throughout by an almost exclusive care for the interests of the middle-class. Only since 1868 has a different spirit prevailed. Still, little notice was paid to the wants of the farm labourers until, in 1884, they too were enfranchised; then indeed a surprising eagerness was shown to do them kindness, and a rapid succession of Allotment Acts, Small Holdings Acts, Free Education Acts, Parish

Council Acts, proved clearly enough how closely the attention of Parliament follows the magnet of political power. Other countries may furnish, it is true, some few exceptions to this general rule. History records instances of governors who, although not appointed by the people, have yet worked actively for the good of the people. There were the "Philosopher Kings" of the eighteenth century for example—Frederick II. of Prussia, Joseph II. of Austria, Charles III. of Spain, and Gustavus III. of Sweden. There were the Jesuit rulers of Paraguay. There were, and are, the British rulers of India. These are cases where governments, despotic in constitution, were sincerely democratic in their action. But such cases have been rare and usually fleeting. They are more interesting as curiosities than useful as teaching a general lesson; and self-interest is so strong a motive that this conclusion has become an accepted axiom of politics—whoever holds a monopoly of power will enjoy a monopoly of its fruits. If the masses of the people, then, are to secure, not merely a partial and casual attention to their needs, but a generous and constant attention, if at the present time, here in England, we wish them to be benefited by an active policy of social reform, there must be no monopoly; the people themselves must hold an equal share of authority, and not petition but command. And the more completely democratic we make our constitution, the more certainty there will be that the laws needed for the general good will receive the sanction of Parliament.

Lastly, a democratic constitution—among the Teutonic races at least—is the most stable. It is less in danger of revolution than any other. No large class is irritated by a sense of unjust exclusion. As in the British colonies, the people are attached to the constitution in which they have a share, and readily obey the laws which their elected representatives alone have made. If the poorer classes suffer from bad conditions, a change of representatives and of Ministers is a peaceful outlet for discontent; the rulers are not entrenched behind constitutional privileges which must first be

destroyed before the change can be made; reformers are no longer compelled to attack the root institutions of the country. "We count heads to save the trouble of breaking them." In most civilized countries no form of government can so fully ensure internal peace, and give that stability and calm which are essential to progress, as one which is framed on the democratic model.

Here then we have the reasons why Liberals have always striven for a system of popular government and are now striving to make that system complete. Democracy raises the status and character of the citizens. It ensures that the laws shall be framed in the interest, not of a dominant class, but of the whole nation. And it is the least liable to violent disturbance.

The arguments, here briefly set out, seem to many to be conclusive. But we cannot merely state them, assume their soundness to be admitted, and pass on. For the principle of democracy is only grudgingly accepted by a large part of the wealthier classes; although the decisive battles of democracy were fought long ago, the forces that lost remain under arms; the attitude of mind which led men to defend the pocket boroughs, to refuse the household franchise and to oppose the ballot, is not dead; it revives to resist manhood suffrage, to maintain plural voting and to protect the House of Lords; and the old arguments against democracy, like the swine of the Irish king in the legend, always come to life again no matter how often they are killed. Whenever reforms in the constitution are pressed, we still hear it said, by innumerable writers and speakers on the Conservative side, first, that the people are not fitted to rule because they are insufficiently educated, and secondly, that if the checks on democracy are taken away, property will be in danger. It is necessary, therefore, before going on to discuss the practical reforms that are proposed, to state the answers which Liberals offer to these objections.

The tasks of government, it is said, are very difficult,

and demand the highest intellectual qualities. Nothing can be more absurd than to place supreme power in the hands of an ignorant multitude. What can the average labourer know of the rules of political science or of the conditions of foreign policy? "How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough . . . and whose talk is of bullocks?" Democracy inverts the right order of things, puts the bottom at the top, gives rule to the hands instead of to the brain, to ignorance instead of to knowledge, and the result cannot fail to be as disastrous as the system itself is contrary to common-sense. Such is the substance of the first objection continually heard.

Now the tasks of government are undoubtedly difficult, but the main body of electors are not called upon to do the finer work. If it were proposed that the details of every Bill should be decided by a popular vote, and that every official should be appointed by direct election, then indeed this argument might apply. But such a scheme is not suggested. The functions of the voter are different to these, and are far simpler.

For what, after all, are the electors, as electors, called upon to do? Not, surely, to originate policies, not themselves to carry on the government, not to give decisions on matters of detail. They are asked only to judge between policies that are offered to them, to decide the spirit in which the government shall be conducted by others, to fix broad tendencies and to determine general principles. When the five millions of voters go to the poll at a general election there emerge from the confused Babel some such declarations as these: "We wish for a Parliament that will carry measures for the reform of our bad conditions;" or, "We think that this party is more likely than its opponents to manage the affairs of the empire in a right spirit;" or, "We will not support men who are constantly involving the country in war;" or again, "We object to the reforms proposed by the existing Government, because they seem unjust and dangerous." For the rest we have representatives, statesmen, political leaders and admin-

istrators, and these are as necessary a part of a democracy as the voters themselves.¹ It is for them to frame and present the policies between which the people shall choose. It is for them to interpret and put into action the broad directions given at the polls. They are the lawyers who draw up and state the case on each side, the judge who sums up the points, explains the law and enforces the verdict. The electorate is the jury. It has to listen and decide on the merits of the matter laid before it. And just as the barrister and the judge must have a technical knowledge of law, while in the jurymen only common-sense and honesty are needed, so the representatives and statesmen, the political leaders and administrators must have a detailed knowledge of politics, but for the electorate this knowledge, though desirable, is not essential. The art of government is difficult, but the voter's part in it is limited and comparatively simple; to perform it properly a simple mind suffices.

Here then we have the explanation of the fact which seems at first sight so remarkable, that popular rule can be highly successful although the education of the people is very imperfect; and here we have the reason why Liberals contend for manhood suffrage and reject all proposals for setting up educational tests.

Disraeli, in his Reform Bill of 1867, would have given additional votes to University graduates, professional men, ministers of religion, and certified school-masters. Mill proposed that an applicant for the franchise must be able "to copy a sentence from an English book and perform a sum in the rule of three in the presence of the registrar." The suggestion is often heard that no one should be allowed to vote who cannot read and write; and this course has been taken in Italy, Portugal, some of the South American republics, and in Cape Colony.²

¹ "All free governments must consist of two councils, a lesser and greater; or, in other words, of a senate and people. The people, as Harrington observes, would want wisdom without the senate: the senate without the people, would want honesty." (Hume.)

² In Cape Colony, however, the plan is adopted in order to prevent the Kaffirs exercising a controlling political power.

But the main body of the Liberal party consistently oppose all such proposals, because they hold that no sieve of this kind can, in England, separate the competent voters from the incompetent. The lowest literary test would shut out many a plain, level-headed workman who, though he has little learning, is not prevented by that from forming a very shrewd judgment on the trend of events and on the general lines of a right policy, who is often better able, indeed, to see the wood in spite of the trees, and, unconfused by masses of detail, to discern the broad outlines of the questions at issue.

And are we to suppose that the educated man is always, or even usually, a scientific politician? He may be better acquainted, it is true, with the names of Ministers and the titles of Acts. He may be able to put his finger correctly on Wei-hai-wei in the map. He may be able perhaps to explain the difference between Treasury Bills and the Funded Debt. These are useful qualities, no doubt. They may be valuable in forming public opinion on particular points. But they are certainly not the qualities needed at the polls in a general election. And on the broad issues that are there chiefly in question it is absurd to pretend that the average merchant, or the average doctor, or the average farmer or clerk, is more likely to have formed calm, unbiassed judgments, on grounds of sound principle, than the average member of any other class. For who can candidly deny that among these sections of society there are many men who give little thought to the deeper political issues; whose root opinions are breathed in, so to speak, with the atmosphere that happens to surround them, picked up, without independent reasoning at all, from the newspapers they are accustomed to read and from the circles in which they are accustomed to move, or adopted in deference to the social conventions which they are accustomed by habit to obey? And is there any reason to believe that such men are not as numerous there as in any other class? Doubtless when you have manhood suffrage and an electorate of ten millions you will have a larger number of voters whose

judgment on fundamental questions is wrong, than when you had a limited suffrage and an electorate of one million. But no one is entitled to say that the proportion, the percentage, will be larger.

[The main point, then, which Liberals emphasize is this: the electorate, in a democratic constitution such as ours, is called upon to decide, not points of political detail, but the right aims of domestic policy, the right tone of foreign policy—only the larger issues that mould the fate of the nation—and education gives no guarantee that on these fundamental questions a man's judgment will be sound. Wisdom, not learning, is needed, and wisdom is not the monopoly of a class.]

Let it be clearly understood that to say this is not to argue that every people is competent to give wise decisions even on these general issues, that all nations are equally qualified for democracy.

Many of the eighteenth-century pioneers of modern Liberalism held the simple theory that democratic principles could be applied in any country, at any time, and without any qualifications; they held that all men, even all adults without regard to sex, had an equal natural right to a share in their own government. The theory has long been abandoned. Few Liberals would now say that to set up in India, for example, a supreme Parliament elected by adult suffrage would be other than a fatal blunder. The black republics of Hayti and Liberia give little encouragement to a doctrine of universal democracy. Whether some of the South American States are the better for possessing the forms of self-government is often doubted. This, however, is not the question now at issue. Liberals, no longer contending that all human things have an equal natural right to the franchise, or that every nation will be governed well if it is governed by the whole body of its people, do contend that in the special case of the United Kingdom, the nation is, as a matter of fact, able to give wise judgments; and they quote in their support the best of arguments, the actual experience of the past.

When we turn over the pages of the histories and

reported speeches of earlier days, it is interesting to note how deep were the fears of disaster that were widely expressed whenever a measure of Franchise Reform was about to be passed. Turbulence, mob-rule, widespread corruption, the oppression of minorities, were prophesied as the inevitable results of an extended suffrage. Imperial decline and commercial ruin were loudly foretold. "Now we may never expect to see the same prosperity in England again," said the Duke of Wellington when the Reform Bill of 1832 became law. A well-known banker of Leeds declared at that time that his bank could not possibly be kept open with safety. The Marquis of Hertford of the day was so alarmed that he transferred a large sum of money to investments abroad (where, as it happened, by the repudiation of a national debt, he lost it all). Of the Reform Act of 1867 Carlyle wrote,¹ in his pleasant fashion, that it was a measure for "the calling in of new supplies of blockheadism, gullibility, bribeability, amenability to beer and balderdash, by way of amending the woes we have had from our previous supplies of that bad article. The intellect of a man who believes in the possibility of 'improvement' by such a method is to me a finished-off and shut-up intellect with which I would not argue: mere waste of mind between us to exchange words on that class of topics." Complete national collapse, he declared, was inevitable unless the aristocracy led a counter-revolution. On every occasion we find the deepest distrust of the good sense of the people, the fullest use of what Bentham called "the hobgoblin argument," and the gloomiest forebodings of disaster as the result of the advancing tide of democracy. Yet none of these consequences have occurred. We find indeed that the very opposite has occurred. Since 1832, still more since 1868, there has been a marked advance in all the elements of national well-being. At no previous period in the country's history has there been such an increase in population, trade and wealth, such an extension of Imperial greatness, such unbroken order at

¹ *Shooting Niagara: and After?*

home. Never have Parliament, local government and the civil service been so uncorrupt and efficient, and never have the rights of minorities been so carefully respected. So far as we can judge there are no signs that the enjoyment of any of these advantages is now endangered. If Ireland is still discontented and if unnecessary suffering is still widespread among the poor, we may fairly say that too little and not too much democracy is the cause, that more self-government and not less will be the cure.

Unless the British electorate had been gifted in a high degree with a capacity to form wise decisions, the record of this period would have been very different. The principle of trust in the people, which Mr. Gladstone held to be a central doctrine of Liberalism, has been justified of its fruits; and no inconsistency can be more gross than that of the men who at one moment praise the political achievements of the nineteenth century, speak of the glories of the Victorian era, and dilate on the larger prosperity, the wiser laws, the improved condition of the people, the development and progress of the empire, which have made that era illustrious, but who at the next moment bitterly attack the system of government under whose auspices these benefits have come, and strenuously oppose its further extension. It is not mere conjecture or prophecy, but the known experience of the past, which gives ground for a confident belief that a yet fuller liberty will bring still greater blessings.

A deficiency of education, then, has not unfitted the masses of the people for a full share of self-government. Is it their poverty which should make the wealthier classes distrust them? They have no "stake in the country," we are told, and therefore no personal interest in good government. They have little wealth and others have much, and they will inevitably be tempted sooner or later to use their power as a majority in order to attack the rights of property.

Liberals answer that no error is more gross, no catch-

word more empty of reason and truth, than this old cry, "the working-classes have no stake in the country." Does not the employment, the very livelihood, of working-men wholly depend on the country's success in manufacture and trade? Is not their labour the foundation of its industries? As consumers do they not share in the country's wealth, as subjects are they not bound by its laws, as tax-payers do they not bear its burdens, as soldiers and sailors have they not fought its battles, as colonists has not their class built up the most valuable part of its empire, and as patriots do they not take the pride in its glories which is the common heritage of every order of Englishmen? More than three-fourths of the population belong to the working-classes. To say that all these have no interest in good government because they own little property, is to put citizenship and patriotism on so low and sordid a level that one marvels that a great party should ever have adopted the doctrine as their own and made it a leading article of their political faith. Truly the working-classes have no small stake in England's welfare. If this be the qualification for the franchise they have it to the full.

To say that men who own little property have therefore little to lose through misgovernment is obviously false. The very opposite indeed is the case. It sounds paradoxical, but it is none the less true, that the class which would have the most to lose by national decline is the class which has the least accumulated wealth. For in any commercial collapse the merchant or the capitalist may find his income lessened, he may be deprived of his comforts, he may be forced largely to retrench his expenditure. The workman loses his daily bread. His income is not lessened, it disappears. He has to fear, not discomfort, but starvation. The manufacturer waits for better times, but the labourer, who loses his work, cannot afford to wait. Prolonged unemployment is the gravest calamity that can threaten him, and the working-classes have more cause, and know that they have more cause, than any others, to be nervous for the security of trade, and to be hostile to laws that would injure it.

Picture for a moment what results would follow if short-sighted demagogues gained so much influence over the people that a Parliament was elected pledged to a policy of confiscation. The effect would be swiftly seen. The commercial classes no longer having confidence in the national government, a series of financial panics, a large emigration of capital, a serious decline of trade, a period of bad times unprecedented in severity, would be the immediate and inevitable consequence. With the unemployment of large bodies of labour, innumerable homes would be plunged into acute distress. Can we doubt that the Government or party which was the author of these calamities would soon be bitterly denounced by the very men who had been its dupes, and that if the policy were sanctioned for a moment, the experience of its effects would soon bring a reversal, and would for ever prevent a repetition? Those who prophesy communistic legislation usually say, with great truth, that the working-classes themselves would be the first to suffer. Strange that it does not occur to them that the very fact they are accustomed to urge is a sufficient answer to their own forebodings. The self-interest of the working-classes themselves is the best guarantee against predatory laws. The indispensable services which capital renders to the nation is the best guarantee for its defence.

But no such gloomy experience is needed to inoculate the nation against a policy of confiscation. The masses of the people are well aware of the consequences that would follow from a subversion of the social system. Moreover, no one who is acquainted with the real character of the English people will deny that there is among them an innate sense of justice which may be trusted to stop at the source any tendency to rob minorities of that which is rightfully theirs.

The friends of democracy have a right to ask for the evidence in support of the accusation that is made. Writers, such as Mr. Lecky, do indeed point with a trembling finger to recent Irish land legislation, to the proposal to graduate the income-tax above, as well as

below, the limit of £700 a year, to the proposals dealing with the unearned increment, and to one or two similar items in the Liberal programme of reform; and these, they say, show a dangerous tendency.¹

But every one of these measures can be defended in turn on the strictest grounds of justice. They are in no way "aggressions of the 'have-nots' on the 'haves.'" Rather they are attempts, moderate to a degree, to remedy the long-continued aggressions in the past of the "haves" against the "have-nots." If Irish landlords first confiscate the soil of the Irish people and then raise the rents as fast as the tenants improve the farms, if a class legislature imposes a heavier burden of taxation on the poor than on the rich, if, through the neglect of Parliament, a small group of men are allowed to levy a heavy toll of rent on every increase of prosperity and every municipal improvement due to the labour or made at the expense of the public at large, it is a strange doctrine which would have us believe that those who would stop, and not those who perpetrated, these evils are the ones to be condemned for injustice. As well say that a man who turns an intruder out of his house is to be punished for assault or that one who takes back goods stolen from him is guilty of theft. When the people came into power after centuries of exclusion, it was only to be expected that many inequalities would be found needing reform. The economic changes that have been made or that are imminent are not attacks on the legitimate rights of property. They are no more than attempts to readjust fairly the balance between classes, one scale of which has for generations been grossly overweighted.

"But," says the opponent, "we must take into account the Socialists. It is they who furnish the real proof of the dangers of democracy. From their programmes we see very clearly what property has to expect if manhood suffrage is established, if the control of the Lords is destroyed, if the people really get their heads." To

¹ See Mr. Lecky's pessimistic work, *Democracy and Liberty*, *passim*.

bring the extremer sections of the Socialists into the witness-box is to cite the best evidence in defence of democracy.

Nothing at first sight would seem more attractive to the poorer classes than the ideas of this school ; and seldom has a policy been urged with greater zeal, eloquence and persistency than that advocated by the Independent Labour Party, the Social Democratic Federation and their allies. If the people were really inclined to subversive measures, here were the means for effecting them. Yet the agitation, after ten or fifteen years' continuous effort, has proved an almost unmitigated failure ; the vast majority of the working-classes will neither join the Socialist bodies nor support the Socialist candidates ; and where they do win converts it is, notoriously, rather because they seem more in earnest than others in pressing for moderate and practicable social reforms than because of the general theory on which their policy is based. There are Jacobite Leagues in England. One man might say that their existence is a proof that the English people is disloyal to the reigning House. Another would answer that their insignificance is the best possible proof of the nation's loyalty. Obviously the latter is right. So in this case, the fact that so small a minority of the people belong to the extreme Socialist groups, is sufficient of itself to dispose finally of the argument that democracy, established in its completeness, will be disastrous because it would be confiscatory.

{ Liberals hold, then, that the objections commonly offered to democracy are baseless, and they continue undeterred their efforts to perfect the structure of self-government in order that the nation may secure, in the fullest degree, the benefits which a system of complete political freedom can alone confer. }

CHAPTER II

THE FRANCHISE

OF the ten million adult males in the United Kingdom three and a half millions have no votes.¹

When we hear this fact stated for the first time it seems astonishing. People are so accustomed to think that the great Reform Bills have stretched the franchise, or at least the male franchise, to its widest bounds; they are so accustomed to say that in England a popular suffrage has been fully established in practice, however grudgingly it may have been accepted in theory, that the continued disfranchisement of a third of the nation comes as a surprising revelation. How has this deficiency occurred? That peers and aliens, paupers, lunatics and convicts should not be voters is easily understood. But these classes, or the men above the age of twenty-one in these classes, do not number three and a half millions; they probably number less than 700,000.² How are we to account for the remainder,

¹ The census of 1891 gives the number of males above the age of 25 as 8,141,152. The number above 21 may be calculated at 9,340,000. To obtain the figures for 1900, 8·7 per cent. must be added for the increase of population, giving a total of 10,152,000. But the number of Parliamentary electors on the register of 1900 was only 6,732,000, and this total includes a considerable number of duplicate entries.

² Men above the age of 20 receiving Poor Law

	Relief, about	...	515,000
"	who are insane	...	56,086
"	who are in prison, about	...	16,216
"	who are aliens, about	...	93,281

Total ... 680,583

[P.T.O.]

now that Parliament has granted a householders', a lodgers' and a service franchise?

The present law relating to the suffrage is to a large extent a deceptive and a sham law. It has removed, indeed, the great class barriers, but it keeps a number of petty fences and divisions that exclude without reason and disfranchise without method. To one man it says, you may have your vote because you have lived in your house for eighteen months before this register of electors came into force; to another man, of the same class, paying the same taxes, showing an equal interest in public affairs, it denies the vote: You are no fit citizen, it declares, because your tenancy has only lasted seventeen months or a year. To a dock labourer in a town who pays four shillings a week for the room in which he lodges, the constitution opens wide its doors; against an artizan living in a village, enjoying better accommodation, but paying for it only three shillings rent a week, it shuts them close. A coachman living over his stables is held to be fitted for the rights of citizenship, but a butler living under his master's roof is quite unworthy. Such are the anomalies that shut out nearly a third of the people from the benefits of self-government.

In many countries "the deprivation of civil rights" is

For number of paupers in England and Wales, classified according to age, see Charles Booth, *The Aged Poor—Condition*, p. 43. For ratio of pauperism of Scotland and Ireland to that of England and Wales, see *Statistical Abstract for United Kingdom*, 1900, pp. 258–260. For numbers of insane, prisoners and aliens, above the age of 20, see *Census of 1891—England and Wales*, vol. iii. pp. xxxix, lxii, lxiv; *Scotland*, vol. ii., Part I., pp. 57 and 58; *Ireland*, Part II., pp. 137 and 430. In the figures relating to aliens in the census of England, Wales and Scotland, persons born in America are not included; but on the other hand, naturalized aliens are included. The latter probably outnumber the former, so in considering the persons qualified to be voters, the above total of exceptions should be, if anything, slightly reduced. A further reduction should be made to allow for persons between the age of 20 and 21; but again, an increase should be made to allow for the growth of population. In round figures we may take the total to be rather less than 700,000.

a heavy punishment imposed by the law-courts as part of a criminal sentence; but it is for no fault of their own that our rejected citizens are made to suffer; the period of their residence, the size or situation of their lodgings, the size of their master's house, is held a sufficient cause. Our constitution has been made by patch-work methods, and it is more by accident than design that so many spaces have been left bare.

But it is an accident which has important political results. Not only are these millions of Englishmen as completely deprived of the formal duties and definite responsibilities of citizenship as if they lived in Russia or China, and not only are they subject to a stigma and denied a valuable stimulus, but the balance of power is altered, and it is altered to the serious disadvantage of the working-classes.

Unless a man has been in his house for a period varying, according to the date on which he entered it, from eighteen months to two years and a half, he cannot obtain a vote for it:¹ it is the working-men, large numbers of whom are obliged to follow their employment and to move constantly from place to place, who find it most difficult to fulfil the condition. A lodger may only be put on the register of electors if his rooms are worth, unfurnished, ten pounds a year or more; it is the poorest classes who are placed at a disadvantage by the rule. The injustice is seen very clearly when young men living with their parents endeavour to secure a vote; many thousands, belonging to the wealthy and middle classes, are yearly able to register as lodgers because their rooms reach the value required, while a far greater number, sons of working-men, are yearly shut out. It is the working-classes, again, who alone suffer through the many restrictions on the service franchise. Clearly, therefore, these anomalies and inequalities do a very serious injustice, and cannot help having a distinct

¹ A person beginning a tenancy on July 16, 1902, will not be qualified to be on the register until July 1904. The register then made would not come into force until January 1, 1905. Not till then, after a delay of thirty months, can he exercise his vote.

practical influence on the course of public affairs and on the balance of parties.

Nor is this all. The registration laws are a by-word for complexity; innumerable minute conditions have to be observed in claiming a vote; the overseers, whose duty it is to make up the register,¹ are sometimes careless, sometimes influenced by political bias. A great system of registration agents has had to be created by the political parties to do what should plainly be a function of the State, and to see that no man, whom the law declares qualified, shall be omitted from the voters' list through its faulty preparation. The system is extremely costly. It lays a heavy charge on Parliamentary candidates and their leading supporters. But it is nevertheless often ineffective, and the results, after all the expenditure and effort, are in many districts far from satisfactory.²

Once admit the principle of democracy and there can be no valid reason for maintaining a single moment all this cumbersome system of qualifications and divisions, of empty and technical exclusions. Not a shred or particle of argument can be offered in its defence. Nowhere is the case for reform more convincing.³

¹ In London constituencies this duty now falls to the Clerks of the Borough Councils.

² In London, in 1899, over 77,000 names were added, through the action of party agents, to the lists prepared by the overseers. (*Annual Report of the London Liberal and Radical Union*, 1900, p. 6.) Sir Edward Clarke estimated in 1894 that Members of Parliament, candidates and political organizations spent £500,000 a year in helping to administer the Registration Laws. In Liverpool, it is said, between £3,000 and £4,000 a year was annually raised by voluntary contributions for this purpose; in Accrington, £900—and so forth. (See an article by Mr. R. M. Leonard in the *New Liberal Review*, February 1901.)

³ It may be said that the limited franchise for lodgers is useful; to abolish the restrictions would let in a large number, perhaps half-a-million, of young men between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-five, who are not now registered because they have no households of their own and do not occupy rooms in their parents' houses worth £10 a year. To admit this class would be a doubtful advantage. Their judgment is immature and their influence would be dangerous. But supposing that this fear is well founded, the

It is necessary, no doubt, to require that the voter shall have been resident in the constituency for a certain period—the term usually suggested is three months ; for otherwise bodies of men might be moved from place to place to influence particular elections. It is necessary also to exclude peers, so long as they sit in the House of Lords, from sharing in the choice of the House of Commons. Aliens, convicts and lunatics are clearly disqualified. Most persons would agree that it is advisable to exclude paupers who receive regular or frequent relief. But with these few exceptions, Liberals urge the immediate establishment of a simple manhood suffrage ; they claim that no trivial consideration of the kind or value of his dwelling, no carelessness on the part of overseers or political associations, should be allowed to bar any orderly, competent Englishman from a share in the advantages and responsibilities of our system of self-government.

A second reform in the franchise, not less imperatively needed, is the abolition of the plural vote.

As the law stands, a man is an elector in every constituency in which he has a residence or owns real property. A tradesman with a number of shops in different parts of the country, or a merchant with an office in the City, a town-house in Kensington, a country-house in Surrey, and a few cottages or pieces of land bought here

right way, obviously, to guard against the danger is not to maintain a financial test, which excludes the sons of the poor while it admits the sons, equally immature in judgment, of the rich, and excludes many old men as well as many young ; the right way would be to raise the legal age of citizenship. The age of twenty-one is quite arbitrary, and not necessarily better than twenty-three or twenty-five. Although England and almost all her colonies, the various States of the American Union, France, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal and Greece have taken twenty-one as the minimum, there is no unanimity on the point. Holland has twenty-three ; Austria, twenty-four ; the German Empire, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Belgium, Spain, Norway, Japan, Newfoundland and the little colony of Norfolk Island, have twenty-five, and Denmark has chosen the high limit of thirty. The question of raising the age of citizenship at the same time that the other qualifications are lowered is perhaps worth more attention than it has yet received.

and there as investments, will have as much power in the State as six, as ten, or as twenty of his neighbours. A class of peripatetic electors is created who go from one division to another neutralizing the votes of the resident population. And as the law stands, the owner of a freehold in a town is entitled to vote in respect of it, not in the town where his property lies, but in some neighbouring county division arbitrarily chosen. In the Wimbledon Division of Surrey, for example, there are nineteen thousand electors; of these only twelve thousand are residents;¹ the mass of the remainder are freeholders in various parts of South London who have no more connection with Wimbledon than with the isles of Shetland. A by-election has recently taken place in the Stretford Division of Lancashire. Although the majority of the residents were known to be Liberal, the result was the return of a Conservative member, simply because the freeholders of Manchester and Salford, numbering six thousand, are assigned as voters to that constituency and were able to decide the balance. And almost every one of these freeholders not only has a vote for the county in respect of his freehold, but has a vote for some town as well in respect of his residence. Of the many strange provisions of our unique franchise laws this is perhaps the strangest.

How many of these plural voters there are has never been ascertained. But even if the number be comparatively small among the total of electors, they are able—belonging, as they do, in great majority to one party, and distributed, as they are, in large masses in some constituencies, in small bodies throughout the rest—to wield a very large influence, and, in times when parties are fairly evenly balanced, to give the casting vote in deciding the policy of the nation.

Does this abuse find defenders on the ground that property is entitled to a larger share of power? We have already given the reasons why this argument cannot be admitted. And if property is to be specially

¹ These figures are for the year 1900.

favoured, what is to be thought of a device which gives only one vote to a millionaire who has only one house, and twenty votes to a shopkeeper whose business happens to be conducted through twenty branches in neighbouring towns and villages? If property were to be given special privileges, we might at least be logical, and apportion the number of votes according to the amount of the voter's income; one to the working-man, a hundred, say, to the millionaire, and graduated between. But we do not find those who urge this plea pushing their doctrine to its natural, and absurd, conclusion.

Is this abuse defended on the ground that people have a right to political influence in every district where they have financial interests? But the question is not of local government; it is of national government. By all means let a man vote for County Councils, Town Councils, District Councils, Parish Councils, wherever he has property; for he is justly entitled to a voice in the election of every authority which levies rates from him and binds him by its by-laws. But there is only one Parliament. Its laws are substantially the same for the whole country. It does not treat him in different ways because he is a householder in Devonshire as well as a merchant in London. It is not a federal assembly, governing a group of boroughs and counties with separate interests, artificially united; it is a Parliament of a State one and indivisible, and the voter casts his vote as an Englishman, not as a Londoner or a Devonian. However numerous his properties, he is only one person, with one brain, one judgment, and one patriotism. It is to the man that the franchise attaches, and not to the house; it is the nation which it concerns, and not the district.

The abolition of plural voting and the establishment of manhood suffrage follow very clearly from the conclusions of the previous chapter; such objections as are raised against them must be admitted to be based on no

very powerful reasoning. But the third, and last, of the group of reforms commonly urged in connection with the franchise opens one of the most difficult of the many hard problems by which modern statesmen and parties find themselves faced; a problem which the Liberal party has certainly not yet been able to answer with anything approaching a unanimous voice.

We speak of manhood suffrage, but can we stop at manhood suffrage? The women number more than half the nation; is it right to deny to these all the advantages of citizenship? Wealth and education are both rejected as tests for the franchise; should sex still be maintained?

A difficult problem indeed. The arguments of those who press for women's suffrage are weighty. But so, many Liberals hold, are the arguments of their opponents.

The case on the one side may be summarized as follows.

The reasons for enfranchising the working-classes apply with equal force in the case of women. Working-men, you say, are the better for being voters; their self-respect is increased, their outlook is widened, they have an inducement to take that keen interest in public affairs which is in itself an education. But would not women also be raised in precisely the same way by enjoying the same rights? And since their daily lives are usually narrower than those of men, and their responsibilities less, all the greater is their need of the stimulus of citizenship and the larger the advantage they would derive from it. You are giving to him that hath; you are turning the fruitful stream of civil rights into fields that are already green, and denying it to those which are the most parched.

Working-men, again, are to be admitted to the franchise because they have special interests, and those interests would be neglected by a Parliament over which they had no control. But are we to imagine that women have no distinctive interests? The laws, among others, that relate to marriage and divorce, to the

suppression of vice, to the inheritance of property, to the conditions of employment, in many important points affect women differently from men ; case after case can be quoted where they have been, and still are, subjected to unreasonable disabilities ; Parliaments elected only by men are hardly less careless of their rights than Parliaments elected mainly by the rich were careless of the rights of the poor ; and the sexes will not share equally the favours of the State until they share equally its powers. Liberals, who would grant the franchise to all classes, are surely very inconsistent if they would grant it to only one sex.

The duties of voters are simple, and women are able to perform them ; at least as able as the agricultural labourers who are already thought fit for the franchise. The conduct of the women electors of New Zealand, South Australia, and some of the American States, the conduct also of the three-quarters of a million¹ of women who are enfranchised for local elections in the United Kingdom, are precedents which prove their capacity. And if some defects are to be feared, the exercise of power is the best training for its use ; means will soon be found, when parties compete for their support, of stirring the apathetic and of teaching their duties to those who have so far taken little interest, because they have had no reason to take an interest, in public affairs.

Indeed there are ways in which women electors are peculiarly qualified to be of service to the State. To the discussion of such questions as temperance, housing and labour regulation, they will bring a knowledge born of intimate experience. They will furnish a strong body of opinion favourable to peace. More important than all, their entrance into the political field will raise the tone of public life, give more weight to moral considerations, and improve the choice both of men and of measures.

And the time is long past when a narrow doctrine of "woman's sphere" could be allowed to decide the issue.

¹ Home Office Return on Women qualified for the Local Franchise, 1897.

Few intelligent people now-a-days hold the view that the whole female sex should be devoted only to the graces of life and be permitted no share in its serious interests, that their minds and activities should be deliberately narrowed in order that they might be the more willing to minister to the comforts and enjoyments of men. Eastern peoples may think it right to seclude women from the world and to sacrifice one half of the race to the pleasures of the other ; it is not a course that commends itself to Westerns. The Chinese hold that it is unwomanly to walk, and mutilate the feet of girls to prevent their doing so ; it is hardly less absurd to say that it is unwomanly to be intelligent, and to bind up women's minds to prevent them from concerning themselves with general interests. To treat women as though they were domestic animals or domestic machines, their sole duties to keep house, to rear children and to be docile and obedient towards those who control them, is a cruel and a foolish policy ; cruel, because it denies to vast numbers of human beings the happiness that comes from many-sided activities and useful and ennobling pursuits ; foolish, because it defeats its own objects, and produces a race of uncompanionable wives and unintelligent mothers. Kant's saying that "woman is an end in herself and not merely a means to an end" is a truth that comes straight from the first principles of morality ; for no one has a right to deny, for his own advantage, intellectual liberty to any other. We do not dispute, say the suffragists, that the home must be the chief sphere of the great majority of women. But just as a man can take an interest in politics without neglecting his industrial or professional work, so a woman can take such an interest without neglecting her domestic duties. On the contrary, a knowledge of public affairs, by training the intelligence and widening the sympathies, will rather make women better comrades to their husbands and better guides for their children. Women's emancipation from oriental or mediæval restraints is not only a benefit to the sex, but a benefit to the whole race as well,

This is already to some extent recognized. Girls are admitted to an equal elementary education with boys. Large numbers of them are allowed an equal higher education. Many of the trades and professions are open to them. But having granted so much, to deny the suffrage is inconsistent. If it is right that woman should be socially and intellectually free, it is right that she should be politically free. To say that she may work in the factories and the shops, to allow her to become a clerk, a hospital nurse, a teacher, a journalist, or an author, to permit her to administer large properties, and yet to say that the sacred claims of the home forbid her from becoming a citizen, is clearly illogical. Still more unreasonable is it to admit her, as she is now admitted, to some political duties but to deny her others. To allow her to vote in local elections, to serve on Parish Councils, Boards of Guardians and School Boards, even to sit on the throne itself and supervise the affairs of a vast empire, but to hold that her sex unfits her for so simple a thing as the Parliamentary franchise, is surely a gross absurdity, an indefensible anomaly, a patent anachronism. The claim to emancipation is admitted. The suffrage is a necessary consequence.

But when we are almost convinced by the force of this reasoning, strengthened as it is by many minor arguments, pointed by innumerable illustrations, and driven home by a vast array of books and speeches, of pamphlets and leaflets, and all the means of propaganda of a great political movement, we are met by some other considerations which throw many back into a state of doubt or even of hostile conviction.

It is not only the immediate benefit of women, say the opponents, which must be considered in judging this question; the interests of the nation as a whole must take the first place. Are women fit to be voters? Will their admission lead to bad government? These are the first questions to be answered.

The characteristics of women, in the opinion of this school, inspire no confidence that their judgment in public affairs is likely to be sober and correct. En-

franchise them, and the broad outlook and shrewd common-sense of the electorate would be overwhelmed by a flood of unreason and unpractical idealism. Government might become more humane; it would certainly become less efficient. Sentiment would be made the test of legislation, eloquence of statesmanship; personal influence would take the place of principle, and a spirit of effeminacy would overspread the government, silently sapping the foundations of both national and imperial greatness. Sex, in England, at the present time, roughly fixes a line of political capacity beyond which it is not safe to go.

The arguments which try to refute or elude this conclusion are all fallacious. The case of the farm labourers is not a true analogy. That class, although excluded from citizenship, had long taken an interest in public affairs; and not only had Trade Unions and Friendly Societies taught them at least the alphabet of government, but the knowledge of the world, which a man unconsciously absorbs through the mere experience of daily life, had given them a training for dealing with political matters which women notoriously lack. The experience of New Zealand and South Australia throws little light on the question in England; for the history and the character of women there are widely different from their history and character here. Competence for local government does not argue competence for imperial government—and any one who has canvassed women voters in a local election will be very doubtful of their capacity even there. To quote individual women who are well qualified to use political power, to say that they are better qualified than the average of men, proves nothing. The question is not of exceptions, but of typical women, of the mass. To rely on practice to bring fitness is a hazardous policy; a generation or more would be needed before the process was complete, and meanwhile the State would be exposed to the gravest danger. And if it be said that the proposal now before the country is merely to give the vote to those women who have the rate-paying qualification, and that

their numbers are so small that their incompetence, even if admitted, would not seriously impair the judgment of the whole, it is answered, first, that even three-quarters of a million votes is no trifling addition, and secondly, that a rate-paying franchise can only be a temporary arrangement. Tests of this kind, illegitimate in theory, will not stand in practice ; to allow a vote to a woman lodger, but to disfranchise her if she marries and has a household of her own, would be rightly considered an injustice ; the same arguments which make us support manhood suffrage without a property qualification would compel us to support, once the line was crossed, womanhood suffrage without a property qualification, and the electorate would soon be flooded by the addition of ten or eleven millions of new, untried and incompetent voters.

These considerations, they say, must decide the matter. It is useless to quote vague phrases about the natural right of every human being to political liberty. There is no such right. The theory of universal democracy has long been discarded. Fitness in a class is an absolute condition of enfranchisement ; and lacking that fitness, the English woman can no more establish a natural claim to the franchise than the English child or the Indian man. And it is idle to say that there is an urgent need of reforming unequal laws which necessitates the grant of the suffrage if justice is to be secured. Facts prove the contrary. The grievances in connection with the laws of divorce, of inheritance, and so forth, are not serious ; and such as they are, they are on the way to remedy. When Mill wrote his *Subjection of Women* he could quote a long list of disabilities of this character. Almost all of them have been removed, but without the help of women's franchise.

To appeal, again, to the general principle of women's emancipation, to denounce those who oppose the immediate grant of the suffrage as though they must all be bigoted enemies of women's progress, is to misunderstand the true state of affairs. Without inconsistency we may sympathize heartily with their desire for wider opportu-

nities, and still deny the fitness of women, at this moment, for political power. One need not hold the outworn doctrine that woman has nothing to do with matters outside the home, in order to argue that woman is not yet able to use with advantage civic authority. It is one thing to grant an equal education and to open the trades and professions to those women who can prove in competition that they are suited to enter them ; it is quite another thing to grant broadcast, without regard to personal capacity, the right, which is also the duty, of voting at Parliamentary elections and sharing in the government of the British Empire. The full liberty of women is an ideal which must command the assent of every intelligent man ; yet we cannot conceal the fact that the movement towards it, if it is not to be injurious, must be gradual. Let us wait awhile. Women's activities are expanding in almost every direction. A great intellectual revival is proceeding among them. A growing section shows keen interest in public affairs and takes a zealous part in political work. Let us give time for these influences to operate. A training in the ways of the world will sooner or later give the competence for citizenship which is now wanting, and a later generation of Liberals may support the claim of a more qualified generation of women to that share in the national government without which indeed the freedom of the sex cannot be complete. But the last steps must not be taken first.

Not one, they say, of the many arguments of the suffragists can disprove or outweigh the fact that women's franchise, granted now, will be hurtful to the country. And if it is hurtful to the country, it will be hurtful to the women as well. They might gain a little by the power to secure laws in their own interest ; they might gain much by the stimulus of citizenship ; they would lose more by the evils of incompetent rule. It is better to be a clerk in a flourishing business than a partner in one that goes bankrupt, and it is better to be a disfranchised subject of a happy and prosperous country than a citizen in one where the constitution is a

failure, the laws are unwise, and the national glories decaying.

On which side lies the truth? The Liberal party gives no united opinion. It is eager to remove disabilities, but equally anxious not to harm the efficiency of government. Both the friends and the opponents of women's suffrage are numerous in the ranks of the party; and while this is so, the reform can neither be denied discussion in its counsels nor find a place in its immediate programme.

CHAPTER III

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

A WIDE franchise and the principle of "one man one vote" are not enough to make the constitution democratic. Something more is needed. We have to see that the elected chamber shall truly reflect in its composition the opinions of the country, and we have to see that it shall not be hindered or thwarted in its work. Unless this be secured, the suffrage may be made as popular and as equal as the most extreme Radical would wish and the government yet remain, in spirit and in action, almost as oligarchic as the most reactionary Tory could desire. The House of Commons, as well as the franchise, must be democratized if self-government is to be complete.

Pocket boroughs, open voting, and religious tests for Members of Parliament have all been abolished; the task of making the House of Commons as fully representative of the people as laws can secure is nearly done. The remaining reforms advocated by Liberals are five in number; but, with a single exception, they are of comparatively minor importance.

One relates to the duration of Parliaments. Although the demand of the early Radicals for annual Parliaments has been abandoned—on account of the harassing frequency of elections and the instability of government to which such a system would give rise—the contention that a House of Commons is likely to grow out of touch with the feeling of the country if it is elected for so long a period as six years, must be admitted to be sound; and Liberal opinion seems to be concentrating in favour of a term of four or of five years.

A second of these reforms is the abolition of the nine University seats ; very anomalous features in the constitution, which are condemned by the argument, amply confirmed in this case by experience, that a high education is no guarantee of political wisdom, and that government by literary men is among the worst of constitutional devices.¹

A third would compress the period of a general election to a single day, and make that day a statutory holiday. It is advocated, not only in order to avoid the disturbance to the ordinary business of the country which is caused by two or three weeks of political agitation and excitement, but also in order to give the people the fullest possible opportunity for recording their votes, and, further, to prevent the polls first declared exercising an illegitimate influence on those which are taken later. At present, as is well known, the party that happens to be successful at the beginning of an election gains a false appearance of strength, and so secures an illicit advantage over its rival.

Another deals with the distribution of seats. Unless each constituency contains a fairly equal number of electors, it will be clear that one voter will have a larger share of political power than another. In the present Parliament, the thirty-three thousand electors of the Romford Division of Essex, for example, are represented by one member ; but the thirty-three thousand electors, who together make up the constituencies of Salisbury, Winchester, Falmouth, Bury St. Edmunds, Whitehaven, Durham, St. Andrews, Sutherlandshire, Wick, Galway, Kilkenny and Dublin University, are represented by no less than thirteen members.² Constituencies may be found side by side like Hereford with 3,529 voters, and South Herefordshire with 10,489 ; Pontefract with 3,004,

¹ "The political influence of the Universities has been almost uniformly hostile to political progress." (*History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iii. p. 215, by Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, now Member of Parliament for Dublin University.)

² Compare Walthamstow, 26,346 electors, one member ; Pontefract, Grantham, King's Lynn, Boston, Taunton, Montgomery, Buteshire and Flint District, 26,201 electors, eight members.

and Osgoldcross Division with 14,689; St. George's-in-the-East with 3,518, and Bermondsey with 11,211; each returning one member. The electoral map is full of such anomalies. Yet a thorough reform, re-distributing seats throughout the United Kingdom, with a closer regard to population, does not at the moment seem to Liberals possible, or even desirable. And for this reason. It is Ireland which is the chief offender in the possession of unduly small constituencies. When her population was larger than it is, and that of Great Britain was smaller than it is, she was allotted 100 members in a Parliament of 650, and later 103 members in a Parliament of 670. But as matters now stand, she is entitled, on a basis of numbers, to no more than seventy-four, and a re-distribution scheme would not be complete unless it took away from Ireland thirty-one of her seats and gave them to Great Britain.¹ Liberals, however, hold that to do this would be highly unjust, unless at the same time the relations of Ireland to the sister countries were entirely remodelled by a scheme in the direction of Home Rule. For, in the first place, when her own Parliament was abolished, Ireland was given the right "for ever" of sending 100 members to the Imperial Parliament;²

1	Population (Census of 1901.)	Actual number of Members of Parliament.	Actual number of persons to each Member.	Number of Members under a complete re-distribu- tion scheme.	Number of persons to each member under a complete re-dis- tribution scheme.
England and Wales	32,526,000	495	65,700	526	61,870
Scotland	4,472,000	72	62,100	72	61,870
Ireland	4,456,000	103	43,200	72	61,870
	41,454,000	670		670	

² "That it be the Fourth Article of Union that . . . one hundred commoners be the number to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. . . . [P.T.O.]

the Act which included this clause termed itself "The Treaty of Union"; you cannot abrogate one of the clauses of a treaty without the sanction of both of the parties, and you cannot, therefore, deprive Ireland of her thirty-one members without the consent, not likely to be given, of the Irish representatives and people. And, in the second place, the shrinkage in the population of Ireland has been largely due, in the opinion of Liberals, to bad government—to the absence of sufficient self-government. To use the fact as a reason for taking away a third part of such political power as remains would be an intolerable piece of injustice, to which no fair-minded man could for a moment consent. So, unless a fuller measure of local self-government is granted to Ireland, we must be content with only a partial redistribution of members, and re-allot by separate schemes the seats in Great Britain and the seats in Ireland. This, however, would be enough to remove the grosser anomalies; it would be a long step towards securing "one vote one value," and it is a reform highly desirable if the House of Commons is to be made a true reflection of the opinions of each country.

None of these proposals need detain us here at any length. After what has gone before, their claims are self-evident. But the last of this group, that which advocates the Payment of Members, is the subject of a keen controversy and demands fuller treatment.

The House of Commons is not yet the commons' House. Its members are drawn from a mere fraction of the nation. The lower middle and working-classes,

"The said foregoing articles, each and every-one of them, according to the true import and tenor thereof, be ratified, confirmed and approved, and be, and they are hereby declared to be, the articles of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and the same shall be in force and have effect for ever, from the first day of January, which shall be in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and one." Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1800. (The term "Treaty of Union" occurs in the body of the Act.)

who form the bulk of the governed, provide only a handful of the governors; and, in the present Parliament, there are barely forty members of the rank of farmers, teachers, shopkeepers and artizans to influence the decisions of six hundred and thirty who are land-owners, capitalists and professional men¹—"but one halfpennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack." We have no reason to say that the disproportion is due to a general desire on the part of the constituencies to confide only in men of means. It is rather the natural result of the existence of barriers, which, set up by no statute and authorized by no assembly, but none the less real and formidable, close the way to poverty and secure a monopoly to wealth.

An average borough election costs a candidate from three hundred to six hundred pounds; a county election from six to twelve hundred. Attendance at Parliament occupies the greater part of a member's time for half the year. Few but men of large private means can make, and few but the pensioners of political parties escape, the heavy financial sacrifices which these conditions involve. The Act of Queen Anne which imposed a property qualification on Members of Parliament² has long been repealed, and no one would propose to revive it. But this informal, unwritten qualification, the effects of which are almost precisely the same, has been allowed to stand, to the injury of the representative character of Parliament and in flat contradiction to every democratic principle.

For how can there be true self-government if restrictions, whether formal or informal, written or unwritten, are allowed to limit the people's free choice of their representatives? What liberty of election is there when all men of small income, however able, upright and earnest, however closely their convictions may tally with those of the electors, are barred from candidature; when political associations are compelled to seek their

¹ See an analysis in the *St. James's Gazette*, October 18, 1900.

² Six hundred pounds a year in real property for county members, and three hundred pounds for borough members.

candidates within a small circle of rich men, and to accept—notoriously a frequent case—some dilettante politician, some landowner or capitalist whose views on important points are not their own, some questionable financier or some lawyer more ambitious than reliable, solely because there is no other available member of their party who possesses the necessary means? What hope is there of adequate social reform when the Lower Chamber is so composed that it can only approach industrial questions from the outside and never from the inside, can only know the needs of the people by information at second-hand and never learn them by actual experience; when a class spirit pervades it, leading it to deal with progressive legislation like an unwilling servant, idle whenever the master's eye is not on him, careless of details, obeying rather the letter than the spirit of the orders he has received? And finally, what freedom of career is there when this road is closed; when the poor man, however capable, sees the higher positions in the State arbitrarily denied to him, when the nation blindly repulses from the Parliament and from the Ministry all talent that is not combined with wealth? The House of Commons is the most conspicuous theatre of public action, and gives the widest scope for useful work. To enter it is one of the most honourable ambitions that a British subject can form. An injustice is done to the majority of the nation, if its doors, opened wide to the rich, are left scarcely ajar for the poor.¹

Such are the grave abuses that attach to the present system and such the reasons that lead Liberals to demand the grant of a moderate salary to Members of Parliament, together with the payment of the official expenses of elections from public funds.

Can any other remedy be suggested? It is some-

¹ "An unpaid legislature is an institution essentially aristocratic—a contrivance for keeping the legislature exclusively in the hands of those who can afford to serve without pay. . . . Of the able men the country produces, nine-tenths at least are of the class who cannot serve without pay." (J. S. Mill.)

times said that voluntary action will meet the need : if a constituency, or a party, or a particular class, wishes to be represented in Parliament by a man specially qualified by his talents and his views but hampered by the smallness of his means, it can subscribe a fund for his support and for the cost of his election. But voluntary action is neither adequate nor unobjectionable. To require a fund to be raised in each case is to impose a fine on the selection of such candidates ; it is to take advantage of the public spirit of individuals by laying on them the cost of a national service ; and it would place the representative under financial obligations that are not consistent with the dignity of his office. If party funds bear the charge, the member can have no independence of action. To leave the payment to trade unions and similar associations would be to convert the House of Commons from an assembly of national representatives to be an assembly of special advocates of sectional interests. There is no satisfactory alternative to the public payment for public work.

It is said, again, that the proposal is too revolutionary, too grave a change in the constitution under which we have lived and prospered so long. But things need not be new because they are unfamiliar ; it should not be forgotten that the payment of members was the established practice of the constitution for over three centuries, and those not the least glorious centuries in the history of the House of Commons.¹ And is it revolutionary to suggest that candidates should no longer be required, not only to give their talents and time to the service of the State, but to pay from their own purse for the printing of the ballot-papers, for the hire of the ballot-boxes, for the fees of the counting-clerks, for the remuneration of the Returning Officer, for the printing of the notices, and for the hundred other charges which make up the official expenses of their election ? We may

¹ From the time of Edward II. to that of Henry VIII. The custom died away gradually, and there were many cases of salaries being paid up to the year 1681.

indeed marvel that such a custom could ever have arisen, and to abolish it is rather a return to elementary principles of fairness and of common sense than a revolutionary change to be contemplated with alarm.¹

But it is said, finally, that a class of professional politicians would be created, unsuitable men would go into Parliament for the sake of the salary, and the character of the House of Commons would be fatally injured. It is this idea which leads many to resist the reform, and serves as a plausible excuse to others whose real objection comes from their dislike for every proposal which tends to democracy.

Were this result indeed probable, the discussion need go no further. Whatever the other advantages of the plan, such a drawback would be ample to condemn it. Strong and upright legislators are as essential to the success of a democracy as strong and capable officers to the success of an army in the field; and it is rather the friends of absolutism than the friends of self-government who would urge a reform likely to degrade and bring into disrespect the chief authority in the representative system. If Liberals refuse to yield to this objection, it is through no lack of jealous care for the reputation of the House of Commons—that is of the very essence and fibre of their policy; it is because they emphatically deny that through this reform its reputation would be lowered.

Is it seriously imagined that a salary of two or three hundred pounds a year would prove so powerful an attraction to ambitious and clever but unscrupulous men

¹ The Returning Officer's expenses, as these charges are called, amount in a contested county election seldom to less than £200 for each candidate, and often to more than £300; in a contested borough election seldom to less than £100, and often to more than £150. Such a sum is no small tax on an individual purse; but thrown on the rates, and assuming that a general election is held every four years, it would only involve an annual average charge, in England and Wales, of one twenty-third of a penny in the pound. (Total of Returning Officers' expenses in the election of 1895, England and Wales, £124,927. Total rateable value of England and Wales, 1899, £172,065,842.)

that they would be willing to sacrifice all the time and energy needed to obtain it? And if it were, is it really supposed that the electors are so readily deceived that the attempt is likely to succeed? Those who have only an arm-chair acquaintance with the working of English politics easily fall into a confusion of thought on this matter. Self-seeking men would go into the House of Commons, they say. But men do not "go into the House of Commons" as they go into trade, or open an office, or enlist in the army. They are sent to the House of Commons. It is one thing to wish to enter Parliament; it is quite another, as many find by stern experience, to arrive there. The support of an influential committee in some constituency, and the support of some thousands of voters at the poll, are not unimportant preliminaries, and these cannot be had for the asking. The electors have a care for their own interests. They are watchful guardians of the honour of their governing bodies. Although it is often difficult to find suitable candidates within the narrow circle to which the choice is limited, the smallest suspicion of a man's honesty is usually enough to exclude him, or, if he once slips into Parliament, to prevent his return a second time. The good sense of the people, which has proved a sufficient defence against revolutionary policies, will prove a sufficient defence against dishonest candidatures.

Moreover, if salaries were in question, the voters would be more than ever on the alert against corrupt motives on the part of those who asked for their support; there would be an even closer scrutiny than now of a candidate's record and character, precisely on account of the danger which is urged as an objection. And if members were paid and the field thrown open to a larger number of aspirants, the competition would become far more keen. Instead of one or two names under the consideration of a selection committee there would be a dozen or a score, and it would be far easier than is now the case to choose the good and reject the bad.

Indeed when we come to examine the proposal carefully, we find that, so far from tending to lower the

standard of the House of Commons, it seems likely to prove the most effective means that any one could suggest for raising it; and it is advocated, in addition to the other reasons, on this very ground.

Even the House of Commons cannot escape the rule that nothing human is perfect. Whispers are sometimes heard that not a few of its members are wanting in the detailed knowledge of political questions and the close attention to business which the right performance of their lofty and difficult duties demands. It is even hinted that there are too many financiers there to whom the House is a stepping-stone to directorships, too many lawyers who regard it as the avenue to judgeships, too many *nouveaux riches* ambitious for social distinctions, and too many idle men anxious for a position that will give them both dignity and the semblance of an occupation. And some venture to suggest that this is one of the chief reasons why the habits of the House of Commons are so notoriously unbusinesslike and its proceedings so notoriously dilatory; the reason also why the ministries themselves do not always reach so high a standard of ability as the nation could wish—for if you have a Parliament of mediocrities you cannot escape having a ministry of mediocrities as well. Payment of members may indeed upset some long-established traditions; they may be bad traditions for all their antiquity. It may effect large changes; but we have not yet reached that pitch when every change must necessarily be for the worse.

It is the "professional politician" who is the bugbear under which the opponents of the scheme conceal their opposition. And if by "professional politician" is meant one who uses the arts of politics as a means merely of making a livelihood and securing his own advancement, he is doubtless a very undesirable person to admit into public life. He is, however, as we have suggested, often admitted already, through the choice of representatives being unduly limited; there is reason for believing that, by widening the choice, the new system would exclude him. But the term "professional politician" may have

another meaning. A professional politician may be one who has a professional knowledge of politics, who has made them the study and interest of his life; and it is by no means certain that the admission of a larger number of men of that type would weaken our Parliament.

At one time it was generally thought that any person, who chose to offer himself, was qualified to stand up and preach and instruct the people in the truths of religion. Even the most evangelical Churches now admit that a certain theological training is necessary. It was once the custom to give a commission to any country gentleman who was willing to raise a troop of horse and lead it in the field. An apprenticeship to the science and art of warfare is now-a-days held indispensable for an officer. So, perhaps, it may some day be realized that the business of government is not less difficult than that of preaching or of manœuvring, that it can by no means be done successfully on methods of rule-of-thumb, and that even a few "professional politicians" may be a strength and not a weakness to the State. If payment of members helps to introduce such a class it will indeed be one of the greatest boons that any change in the machinery of the constitution could give to the nation. Pepys tells us in his *Diary* that in his day "all concluded that the bane of Parliament hath been the leaving off the old custom of the places allowing wages to those that served them in Parliament, by which they chose men that understood their business and would attend it."¹ After two centuries we seem likely to come back to Pepys' opinion.²

¹ *Pepys' Diary*, March 30, 1668.

² It is unnecessary, perhaps, to devote space to answering the objection that payment of members is to be condemned on the strength of Continental and American experience. The governments of foreign countries are inferior to our own; all constitutional States (except Italy) have payment of members and we have not; therefore payment of members would be a mistake; such is the argument. It is strange how the opponents of reform call in foreign experience on all occasions, and with what equanimity they

Those who oppose the reform—and it is met with a resistance as bitter as any in the long catalogue of Liberal proposals; a resistance as bitter, indeed, and, if the truth were known, inspired by the same reasons of class prejudice, as the resistance offered thirty years ago to the abolition of purchase in the army—must take their stand on some or all of a series of propositions which are contradicted by every political principle usually held to be sound, and by every observation of the facts usually held to be true. They must support the principle of property qualifications for Members of Parliament. They must hold that the nation is divided into two separate castes—of poor and rich, the former of which may vote at the polls, the latter alone fill the Parliament and hold the important offices of State. They must deny the doctrine of equal opportunities, the rule that every road should be open to talent, that every man should have an equal chance of rising, by his merits, to the highest stations. They must assert that the attention given by Parliament to the social conditions of the people is adequate, and that no steps are needed to stimulate it. They must believe that the composition of the House of Commons is now so excellent that a widening in the area of choice is unnecessary for its improvement. And they must hold that the British nation is incompetent to select its representatives wisely unless its choice is limited by financial restrictions.

But these are doctrines to which no Liberal can for a moment agree.

make it blow hot or cold at their pleasure. Most other countries have payment of members; therefore payment of members is wrong. Most other countries have second chambers; therefore second chambers are right. Most other countries have nationalized railways; therefore nationalized railways are wrong. Most other countries have protective tariffs; therefore protective tariffs are right. And so forth, *ad libitum*. They forget that differences of race, tradition and social structure have so penetrating an influence that only rarely can the experience of one country be applied to the conditions of another, that "Comparative Politics" of this kind are the most dangerous of all sciences.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

[WE have said that three things are clearly essential to a system of self-government; that the franchise shall be wide and equal; that the elected Chamber shall be so composed as truly to represent the views of the people; and that the elected Chamber shall not be hindered or thwarted in its work. The last of these points remains to be treated. It brings us face to face with the problem offered by the present constitution and powers of the House of Lords; and it will lead us also to consider the possible means of relieving that constant glut of business which is one of the chief hindrances to the efficiency of the House of Commons.

Now if we wish to form an intelligent judgment on the House of Lords question, we must first have a very clear opinion in our minds as to the functions which a Second Chamber should rightly fulfil, or whether a Second Chamber, in a self-governing constitution, is really needed at all.

We are offered the choice of several very different ideas.

One of these may perhaps be disposed of summarily.

The notion is still apparently held by some that an aristocratic Senate should be the real centre of power in a State; that a body raised by the social position of its members above sordid motives, free from what is pleasantly described as "the passion, the ignorance and the vacillation of the mob," is the best fitted to conduct government; that the power of the House of Lords, consequently, should be rather strengthened than

diminished. We may dismiss this idea summarily because it is directly opposed to the principle of self-government which we take as our starting-point. And indeed there are few people now-a-days who would propose as a practical measure, whatever might be the ideal of their dreams, to revive in England the *Gran Consilio* of Venice.

But there is another view which is more widely held and must be admitted to be far more plausible. In countries, it is said, where the people have large powers, there is always a tendency to legislate too fast; a Second Chamber is needed to confine the torrent of reform within due bounds, to play the part of the locks and dykes which regulate the course of an over-rapid river and make it useful instead of dangerous. The people supply the principle of Progress; a Senate is necessary to uphold the complementary principle of Conservatism.

Then again there is the doctrine that a Second Chamber is desirable, not for the purpose of counter-acting the wishes of the people, but of ensuring that they shall be obeyed. A House of Commons should not be trusted with absolute authority from one election to another. In the interest of democracy itself, a Senate should be placed by its side with the power of referring to the verdict of the electorate any measures of which they may be likely to disapprove. Its composition made as impartial as may be, its authority strictly subordinate to that of the people, such a body with such functions is necessary if we are to escape the risk of misuse of power by party majorities, the danger of a new dictatorship wielded by the House of Commons. Further, on the rule that two heads are better than one, it would help to improve legislation by securing a second scrutiny for the details of Bills and the actions of ministers. It is the principle, neither of a sovereign, nor of a conservative, but of what may be called a watch-dog Senate.

Finally, there are those who deny the value of a Second Chamber altogether. For legislation a House of Commons is enough; to control the House of

Commons the electorate which appoints it is enough. Senates, they say, are harmful as a rule, and when they are not harmful are useless. Either they are nominated, or perhaps elected on a close franchise, and then—however impartial we may try to make them, and however closely we may limit their powers—the experience of many countries shows that they are always partisan, anti-popular, a source of friction and delay; or else they are elected in the same way as the representative House, and then they hold the same opinions and are superfluous. We do not need two chambers in a Town Council or a County Council; it is one of the surviving superstitions of politics to suppose that we need two in a Parliament.

The form of Senate adopted in the United States and in the Commonwealth of Australia need not be considered here. It has no lessons, under present circumstances, for England; since those countries are federations of a number of sovereign states, and their senates are devised so as to mark the equality of the federated provinces—the Lower House is elected on a population basis, the Upper House by each federal unit in equal proportion. But our Parliament is not yet a Federal Parliament, and the constitution to be adopted if ever the various parts of the Empire be represented in one legislature, is a matter for separate and later discussion.

The choice, then, lies between three alternatives. We must decide for a conservative Second Chamber, a “watch-dog” Second Chamber, or no Second Chamber at all.

Now the first of these—a Senate established for the purpose of delay—has few supporters in the Liberal party, and can surely have few supporters in any body of men who view with an impartial mind the facts around them. No one can point to any period in modern English history when there was the smallest tendency for legislation to advance too fast. No one can expect us to believe that there is any such tendency at the present time. And the British people is by nature so

conservative, proverbially conservative, that those who think such a danger likely to arise in the future must be on a par with the Duke of Wellington, the Marquis of Hertford, and the Leeds banker, referred to in an earlier page, who were convinced that the prosperity of the country would be irretrievably ruined by mob-law and thieving legislation as soon as the people were fairly represented in the House of Commons.

Surely he must be of a strange disposition who would say—in an age when open abuses remain untouched generation after generation, when useful changes are postponed decade after decade, when suffering is left unrelieved and privilege left unchallenged through the lethargy of government—that it is necessary to keep a special branch of the legislature with the sole function of hindering reform. Not a rushing torrent, but a nearly stagnant pool, is the right simile for our political life. To surround the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens with locks and dykes would hardly be more foolish than to hamper our slow-moving constitution with elaborate checks and barriers.

No doubt it is harmful to make large changes suddenly. That the nation would be injured by a flood of revolutionary legislation is disputed by no one. But are we to suppose that the nation is so dull that it would not know when it was hurt, so apathetic that it would not cry out, so powerless that it would not sweep from their place the men who were hurting it, so forgiving that it would ever allow them to return? It is the old question of trusting or of mistrusting the people. There is no device in politics, like the governor on a steam-engine, which will automatically slacken the machine when the pace becomes too quick. What is too quick and what is too slow must be left to the judgment of some body of men, either to the judgment of a Second Chamber, or to the judgment of an electorate; and one does not need a very extensive acquaintance with the recent history of European countries, of our own colonies, or of the United States, to know that if the decision be left to Second Chambers they have a

natural tendency to apply the checks too soon and too hard ; nor a very deep knowledge of the English people and of the motives that animate them, to believe that they will be ready to apply the checks quite soon and hard enough. It is not this doctrine of a Second Chamber that we can accept.

The single Chamber system has many supporters in the Liberal party. But it would seem that they are not the dominant section. Certainly there has been no pronouncement in favour of the plan from the leaders of the party or from its chief organizations. These rather favour a Parliament of two Houses, provided always that the Upper House be so constituted that its judgments shall be impartial, and provided that its powers be limited to the right of referring doubtful Bills to the decision of the electorate. Measures which it rejected, passed a second time by the House of Commons, after an interval during which public opinion could declare itself, should become law without further question.)

They take this view for the following reasons. A Second Chamber of this kind, restricted in this way, could do no injury to the rights of self-government, for in all cases the verdict of the people would be final. Its members forming a true aristocracy, drawn from among the most sober men in the nation, it could be trusted to form independent judgments, and not to delay reforms from motives of faction or through timid fear of change. It would not be harmful. Nor would it be useless. The danger which is quoted of leaving the House of Commons quite uncontrolled from one election to the next cannot be dismissed as an unreal danger. For imagine the single Chamber system established, and consider for a moment some of the cases that might easily occur. A general election takes place on some question of war policy ; a Conservative Ministry is returned to power with a large majority ; is it altogether impossible that after a year or two the Ministry might declare that compulsory military service was necessary for the safety of the country, and that a Conscription Bill, although strongly opposed by the majority of the nation, might

be hurriedly passed into law? Or a Liberal Government is returned on a similar question; might it not conceivably be tempted to use its power to carry a Women's Suffrage Bill equally distasteful to the people? A Parliament might be elected to carry out Imperial Federation, and seize the opportunity to re-establish Protection. Or its mandate might be for social reform, and its legislation result in the loss of a colony. These are no chimerical cases. Clearly any one of them might occur in sober reality. And if it did occur, the nation, reading what had been done in its daily papers, might be highly indignant, but would be wholly powerless. Conscription, women's suffrage, protection, the secession of a colony, once in the category of accomplished facts, could hardly be cancelled, and the electorate, absolute in theory, would find itself impotent in practice. So a Second Chamber, armed with a suspensory veto, is thought necessary in order to prevent such acts as these. It would strengthen, not detract from, the powers of self-government; it would be the agent, not the opponent, of the popular will. The French Convention, in the time of the Revolution, used to give the command of the national armies to generals, but sent with them members of its own body to watch for and report any tendency on their part to disobey instructions. In the same way an Upper House is needed to watch on behalf of the nation the doings of its executive officer, the House of Commons.

And many of those Liberals, who do not accept this reasoning but still prefer the theory of the single Chamber, yet declare themselves willing, as practical politicians, to sink their preference and to join in advocating an Upper House of this limited character; for they see, in the first place, that their plan is too great a departure from the existing system to have much prospect of being carried into effect; and in the second place, because they recognize that a complete unity in the progressive forces is needed in order to carry any reform in this matter at all, while the supporters of a constitution of two Houses are so numerous and powerful

within the Liberal party that there is no chance of unanimity if the more extreme course be chosen. So we may take it that, when a practical step is to be made, the mass of Liberal opinion will prefer the principle of the "watch-dog" Senate to that of the single Chamber.

If then we accept these conclusions; if we agree that a Second Chamber is desirable, but that its powers should be powers of reference and not sovereign powers; and if we agree also that its composition should be such as to make its judgments impartial and statesmanlike, we have now reached a standard by which we can test the value of the Second Chamber we have—of the House of Lords.

A Second Chamber should be impartial. If it rejects measures it should reject them because they are believed to be objectionable to the nation, and not because they are opposed by this party or that, or because they run counter to the personal interests of the members of the Upper House itself.

But the House of Lords is not impartial. It is notoriously in strict alliance with the Conservative party. Its own existence, and many of the privileges it holds dear, being threatened by the advance of Liberalism, it is naturally drawn to the side of the opponents of Liberalism. And it still holds the view that the real purpose for which it is established is to act as a brake on the wheel of reform. "For many years," wrote the Duke of Wellington to Lord Derby in 1846, "I have endeavoured to manage the House of Lords upon the principle on which I believe that the institution exists in the constitution of the country, that of Conservatism." The House of Lords is shrewd enough to see that it is not strong enough to enforce a Conservative policy on the nation by its own authority alone; a powerful Conservative party is needed to control the constituencies. So, by a majority of ten to one, its members rank themselves with that party; the House of Lords submits with the utmost docility to be "managed" by the Conservative

leaders of the day ; and it is active or quiescent, vetoes measures or accepts them, at their bidding and to suit their convenience. The Senate of the British Empire has degenerated into a useful piece in the party game. Let a Liberal Government be in power and no safe opportunity is lost to checkmate it. Bills sent up are not considered on their merits. On any colourable excuse they are rejected, in order that the Ministry may be discredited with the electors, and in order that Conservative speakers may tell their audiences how little the Government has been able to accomplish and how useless it is to vote for the Liberals, since even if they have a majority in the House of Commons, the House of Lords will prevent them from carrying out their programme. But let a Conservative ministry come in, and the House of Lords, for all practical purposes, disappears from the constitution. It sinks to the level of that Dutch statesman who was so subservient to the Regent of the Netherlands, the Duchess of Parma, that he was always known as "Councillor Yes-Madam." There is none of the anxious questioning whether or not a particular Bill is approved by the nation, none of the careful watchfulness against hasty legislation, which we look for from a Second Chamber. Measures are passed as a matter of course. The Ministry, above all, must not be weakened. An Irish Local Government Bill or a Workmen's Accidents Compensation Bill, which would certainly be rejected if their sponsors had been Liberals, are found to be accepted with equal certainty.¹ We cannot imagine, no matter what the popular feeling with regard to it might be, that a Conscription Bill introduced by a Tory Government, would be rejected by the House of Lords. When a Conservative Ministry, then, is in power there is no Second Chamber. England is ruled by a single House uncontrolled and supreme ; yet

¹ "He agreed with Mr. Asquith when he said that if the party to which he belonged had introduced this Bill it would not receive forty-eight hours' consideration by their lordships." (Lord Londonderry (now Postmaster-General) in the House of Lords, July 20, 1897, on the Compensation for Accidents Bill.)

strangely enough, we never hear the arrangement denounced by those who at other times are loudest in urging the absolute necessity of government by two Houses! The House of Lords is a judge who is in open confederacy with one of the counsel who plead before him, and its decision can always be foretold as soon as it is known whether the Conservatives are for the prosecution or the defence.

A Second Chamber should be free from the bias of personal interest. The composition of the House of Lords is such as to invite the maximum influence of personal interest. Its members have to deal with matters affecting all classes and all creeds; but they themselves belong almost invariably to one class and almost invariably to one creed. In great majority landlords, they approach land questions from the standpoint of landlords; capitalists, they view labour questions from the standpoint of capital; Churchmen, they view Nonconformist questions from the standpoint of the Church. The interests which each peer has at stake are so large and obvious, that it is absurd to expect unbiassed judgments on the issues between master and workman, between landlord and tenant, between Church and Dissent, between the clerical system of education and the national system, from a Chamber so composed.

The long list of popular measures rejected by the House of Lords in flat defiance of popular opinion¹ proves clearly enough both the loyalty of the peers to their party, and their loyalty to their own interests of class or of creed. The judge is not only the confederate of one of the counsel; he is adjudicating in his own cause as well.

A Second Chamber, again, should be distinguished by a high average of political capacity in its members. But what means are taken to ensure this in the House of Lords? The peers are not chosen by great constituencies from among the wisest men of the nation. They are not,

¹ A fairly complete record may be found in the appendix to Mr. T. A. Spalding's *House of Lords*. See also *Fifty Years of the House of Lords*, published at the office of the *Review of Reviews*.

in large majority, carefully selected by the Crown on the advice of its ministers. The constitution of the House is essentially hereditary. An analysis we have made in March 1901, shows that it is composed of twenty-six archbishops and bishops of the Church of England, three lawyers nominated for life, seventy-eight gentlemen who have been granted peerages on account of services—sometimes difficult to detect—to the nation, and of no fewer than four hundred and seventy-three peers who hold their seats for no better reason than that they are the sons or descendants of previous peers.¹ Roughly speaking, there are rather more than one hundred nominated peers to rather less than five hundred hereditary. But whatever may be the best means of enlisting statesmanlike qualities, it is at least certain that the hereditary principle is the worst. The most convinced evolutionist would not dream of saying that honesty and respectability, far less a capacity to form sound political judgments, can be transmitted with any degree of certainty from father to son. To appoint men as judges, or generals, or railway-managers, merely by virtue of their primogeniture from the judges, generals and railway-managers of an earlier day, is so ludicrous a notion that we should doubt the sanity of any one who proposed it. Yet it is precisely this plan which is taken, by a country that claims to teach the world the right methods of self-government, in the choice of those who are to perform the hardly less difficult duties of senators. No one questions, indeed, the ability of many of the members of the House of Lords. More valuable legislators than some of the holders of new peerages could not be secured. Here and there, by a fortunate accident, the inheritor of an old peerage proves to be possessed of high character and distinguished talents. All such men

¹ Of these, it is true, sixteen are so-called "representative peers" of Scotland and twenty-eight of Ireland. But as these must be hereditary peers of their respective countries, and as they are elected only by their fellow Scottish and Irish hereditary peers, they are rather to be counted among the hereditary than among the nominated members of the House of Lords.

a system of nomination would certainly keep, a system of election would probably keep, in a reformed Second Chamber. But it is equally undeniable that there are a very large number of peers who in no way rise above the commonplace, whose outlook is narrow and whose prejudices are strong: and not a few who look upon their titles rather as a key to financial advancement than as an incentive to the study of the political problems with which they are called upon by their position to deal.

It is unnecessary to spend a moment in discussing the reasons for condemning the presence in the House of Lords of twenty-six of the superior clergy of one of the religious sects. It would not be more obviously absurd if the constitution were to allot seats in the House of Commons to twenty-six Nonconformist ministers and six or seven Roman Catholic priests.

Lastly, the powers of a Second Chamber should be limited to the right of referring doubtful Bills to the judgment of the nation. The powers of the House of Lords—except in the case of Finance Bills, where, by the custom of the constitution, it has no powers at all—are sovereign and unlimited. Its veto is absolute. There is—as, for example, the recent history of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill shows—no end to the pendulum progress of measures from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, from the Lords back to the Commons, from the Commons to the Lords again, *ad infinitum*, or at least till the moment comes, if it should ever come, when the peers voluntarily decide to change their minds.

We hear it said, however, that though this may be the theory of the constitution, the practice of the House of Lords is to reject only those Bills on which the opinion of the country is uncertain. Corn Law Repeal, Franchise Reform, and other great measures, have been passed against the judgment of the House of Lords and in deference to the will of the nation; and whenever the people are in earnest the peers give way. But how has this result been secured? Is it not true to say that the spirit of accommodation which the House of Lords has

sometimes shown has been due, not in the least to respect for the national will, but solely to a selfish fear for its own existence? A fierce popular agitation to abolish the House of Lords itself will indeed force through a large measure of reform proposed by a Liberal Government, and it is the only instrument that can force it through. "Well then," we hear it said, "what more do you ask? The Bills are passed if the country desires them, and it matters very little by what process it comes about so long as the result is attained." But is it really thought desirable that noise, tumult, denunciation, should be normal features in the political life of a great country, or that the people should be taught to see its Parliament passing laws in obedience to clamour which are rejected when urged only by argument? Should the country be satisfied with a constitution which is not a smoothly-working machine efficiently doing the work which is set for it, but is more like a regiment of mutually hostile battalions, one of them openly mutinous, and only brought to obedience at every stage by violent threats of disbandment? And, we may ask again, how often is it supposed that the process can be repeated? The people will not consent indefinitely to attend great meetings, shout "Down with the Lords!" and engage in agitations abortive of general result, on every occasion when an important measure is to be carried. Nor is this all. The weapon is not only clumsy and barbarous; it cannot be used at all in far the greater number of cases. The last Liberal Ministry introduced a Parish Councils Bill and a Factory Bill which were seriously weakened, an Employers' Liability Bill which was destroyed, by hostile amendments in the House of Lords. You cannot set on foot a great constitutional movement on questions such as these; it would be "like hunting a mad dog with horse artillery." In cases of minor importance, threats of destruction are too hollow to be feared, and the House of Lords stands supreme and unchallenged. But measures of minor importance make up the bulk of legislation. To pretend that the House of Lords is really the suspensory

Senate we desire, very obedient to the popular will, active only to check, in the interest of the nation, a usurping House of Commons, is to deck a very obvious wolf in very ill-fitting sheep's clothing.

Liberals, then, will not acquiesce in the continued existence of a body which, though a House of Parliament, is the recognized organ of a party. They hold it intolerable that Liberal Ministries should be condemned to the Sisyphus labour of rolling their measures up the parliamentary hill for the House of Lords to roll them down again. They see with alarm the power given to a Conservative Government to pass what reactionary measures it chooses free from the check of a Second Chamber. They think it contrary to obvious common-sense to maintain a Senate permeated through and through by the bias of personal interest, and so composed that only by accident can the majority of its members be competent. And they hold it an invasion of the national liberties for the veto of a nominated and hereditary House to be a final barrier to legislation.

Such are the counts in their indictment and the reasons for their antagonism.

This is not the place to discuss the form and functions of an alternative Second Chamber. A dozen plans can be devised, and have been devised, any one of them as superior to that now in force as the constitution of Australia is superior to the constitution of China. The details of the reform are the care rather of the statesmen who will introduce it than of the Liberal party as a whole. It is enough to know that the hereditary and ecclesiastical element would be excluded; that an effort would be made to render the House impartial; and that the veto would be limited to the right of rejecting measures for a time, until the opinion of the country concerning them had been able to find clear expression.

Nor is this the place to discuss the tactical question of the method of carrying the reform against the certain opposition of the House of Lords itself. It may be that the precedents of 1711 and 1832 will be followed, and a Bill carried by creating, or threatening to create, a sufficient

number of peers to give a favourable majority in the House. Or it may be that a dormant right of the Crown will be revived, and only those peers summoned to Parliament whose presence is desired. Or perhaps a firm display of public determination, at the polls and otherwise, may be enough to induce the Lords to pass a Bill rather than disorganize the whole machinery of government. Or if all these fail or are found unsuitable, new and exceptional measures may have to be devised—unprecedented means for dealing with an unprecedented occasion. This also is a matter for those who will lead the attack.

[A movement against the Upper House will unite not alone the friends of democracy, but those also who find their chief political interest in the cause of social reform or in the cause of religious equality, since the most determined opponent of both is the House of Lords.] And these sections show clearly enough their readiness to postpone other questions to this; for, just as the engineers building a railway often find it better to spend a large amount of capital in tunnelling once for all through a hill that faces them, rather than carry the line over the summit and make every train climb the slope, so these reformers realize that it is worth while to devote every energy to piercing this obstacle in order to save effort in all subsequent movements for progress.

The constitution of the House of Lords is as clearly irrational as its power is clearly excessive; the one is a censure on the intelligence, and the other an injury to the freedom, of the British people; and a later generation may well wonder how it was that the nation so long maintained a body so anomalous in its form and so constantly hurtful in its action.

CHAPTER V

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

THE Duke of Newcastle, who was Prime Minister towards the middle of the eighteenth century, was said to give the impression, by his hurried bustling manner, that he had "lost half-an-hour each morning and was running about all day to catch it up." The House of Commons is in much the same case. Its inability to cope properly with the mass of business poured in upon it is admitted on all hands. A crowd of measures jostle one another for a place. Great questions are dealt with in haste, or not dealt with at all; and the nation loses some of its respect for an assembly which is always in arrear with its duties, and constantly complaining that want of time prevents it from performing its tasks. The House of Commons is becoming almost as notorious for delay as the old Court of Chancery. Speak to members who have entered it as earnest champions of some useful reform, and more often than not they will tell you how after a few years they turned sick at heart at the futility of their efforts, at their powerlessness to secure an opening for their measures in the crowded stream that hurries through the narrow lane of Parliament.

If ministers wish to avoid fulfilling an inconvenient promise, or to escape dealing with some troublesome matter pressed upon them, this state of affairs gives them a stock excuse and an easy means of evasion. Like a school-boy in an examination who leaves the most difficult questions to the end and writes at the bottom of his paper "No time to finish," they put off public opinion by saying that the subject has been crowded out; and public

opinion being less cunning than examiners, the plan often succeeds. If a group of members wish, for private reasons, to defeat a popular Bill without risk to their own position, they need not vote against it ; an equally effective and far less unpleasant course is open to them ; they may kill it by talking it out. Governments, again, are obliged to annex nearly all the time of the House for urgent public business. Laws passed on the initiative of private members are becoming exceedingly rare. Of the one hundred and eighty-one Private Members' Bills brought in on the average each session, only thirty-one are even discussed ; of these, nine are crowded out after being considered at a second reading, and only a residuum of twenty-two are negatived or passed.¹ By these circumstances the value of the system of self-government is gravely impaired. The nation cannot get the legislation it desires.

Some efforts, it is true, have been made of late years to meet the evil. The old narrow street, unable to take the increased traffic, has been widened and new roads have been cut. The House of Commons deals with more of its business by committees and by the device of "Provisional Orders," and its time is portioned out more carefully than used to be the case. Part of the work, also, has been delegated to the local governing bodies created by successive Acts during the last seventy years. But the continuous increase of business, due to the growth of the Empire, to the new problems of education, of sanitation, of labour regulation, to all the fresh needs of an active, expanding people, make the position hardly better than before. These measures point the direction, they do not avoid the necessity, of further reforms, and there is hardly a politician, no matter of what party, who questions the need* or the urgency of better methods for the despatch of Parliamentary business.

But what means can be suggested ?

¹ An average has been taken of the years 1897 to 1900 inclusive. See House of Commons Annual Returns, *Bills introduced into the House, etc.*

To propose a longer session in each year or a longer sitting on each day would threaten too heavy a tax on the physical powers of those members who attend regularly; the strain is known to be already severe. To curtail the freedom of debate by more frequent closure is a very dangerous expedient, and would make legislation even more hasty than now, while it is wished to make it more careful. Whether time can be economized by a yet larger use of committees is for expert parliamentarians to say, but in any case the relief which would be given in this way is not likely to be large. And the plan of creating a federal Parliament of the Empire and transferring to it all questions of foreign policy, defence, and other matters of imperial extent, has not yet come within the range of immediate politics, and must apparently wait till different views from those which now prevail are held in certain of the great colonies. It would seem that the most practicable means of immediate relief must be found in a further devolution of business to local authorities.

The four portions of the United Kingdom are distinct in race and in history, and therefore, to some extent, in political needs. Scotland and Ireland have their own codes of law relating to land, education, local government and rating; they have their separate Churches, their separate judiciaries, their separate civil services, and special members in the Ministry charged with their separate interests. It is surprising at first sight how small a proportion of the Acts passed by Parliament it has been found possible to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, and how large a proportion have had to be framed to suit the distinct needs of the various parts. An examination of the statutes from 1801 to 1890 shows that less than a third have covered the country as a whole, and that more than two-thirds have been Acts for England, Scotland, Ireland or Wales respectively; and of the debates in the House of Commons other than those relative to Bills, fully one-

half have been of this local character.¹ These facts indicate of themselves the road we seek.

But if we are to tread this path and suggest that the House of Commons should delegate a part of its business to authorities representing in some way the three Kingdoms and the Principality, our movement must recognize from the first one binding condition. If the four states are separated by their earlier, they are intimately united by their later, history; if their race and religion differ, their language and literature are for the most part the same; if geographical boundaries divide them, geographical conditions, viewed more largely, make them an inseparable whole. The British nation refusing—and in the opinion of Liberals, rightly refusing—to dissolve its unity in a federation, and present to the world a divided front, insists that whatever work is deputed must be of a strictly local character, and whatever bodies are created must be in complete subordination to the central authority.

In the session of 1894 a part of the Scottish business was deputed to a Scottish Grand Committee of the House of Commons, and an Act was passed in 1899 establishing a Committee to sit in Scotland for dealing, subject to formal confirmation by Parliament, with certain kinds of Scottish private legislation. These principles may, perhaps, be extended in the case of Scotland and imitated in the case of Wales. Some would go further. We have the policy which is summed up in the phrase, "Home Rule All Round,"—the creation of subordinate Parliaments, on the colonial plan, in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, leaving to the Imperial Parliament the transaction of business relating to the Empire at large and to the United Kingdom as a whole. But the scheme has so far gained the support of only a small section of the Liberal party; the majority appear to think it a remedy unnecessarily severe for the disease, and a policy which, offering advantages little greater than the other, would

¹ T. A. Spalding, *Federation and Empire*, pp. 57, 73.

invite an infinitely more powerful and dangerous opposition. So far as Scotland and Wales are concerned, a moderate measure of devolution to committees consisting wholly or mainly of the Members of Parliament returned by those countries, would give a large relief to the House of Commons, and might be expected to prove a fairly sufficient method of meeting the immediate need.

Ireland, however, is held to require a larger treatment. Her history, her economic condition, and her national sentiment make the case of Ireland distinct; and while the grave problem of her government may here be conveniently approached through the question of the devolution of House of Commons business, it must of course be chiefly considered from the special standpoint of Irish requirements.

What, then, briefly stated and in its main features, is the case for a fuller measure of self-government for Ireland?

It is fourfold. It is Parliamentary: based on the need for relieving the Parliament at Westminster of its congestion of work; on this enough has been already said. It is economic: based on the urgent necessity for improving the material condition of the Irish people. It is democratic: resting on the long-continued demand of the Irish nation for fuller self-government. And it is imperial, springing from the desire to strengthen the British Empire by removing a source of open disloyalty at its centre, of disaffection among many of its colonists, and of a dangerously hostile influence in one of its most powerful neighbours, the United States.

Compare the condition of Ireland with that of Great Britain in any of the matters by which the well-being of a country is usually judged. Take, for example, the number of the population. In the last sixty years it has grown in Great Britain from seventeen and a half millions to thirty-seven millions, in Ireland it has fallen from eight millions to four and a half millions; in the one it has more than doubled, in the other it has been nearly halved. Take again the average wealth of the people per

head : in England it is £331, in Scotland it is £263, in Ireland it is only £142. Or the national income : Great Britain, with eight times the population, has at the lowest estimate twenty times the income of Ireland. Or the amount of capital, per head of the population, invested in railways—a good test of prosperity : in England it is £27, in Scotland £32·7, and in Ireland £8·6. Or if you wish for more direct evidence of the comparative condition of the people, you may find it in the average rental of their houses—in England £22·6, in Scotland £16·1, in Ireland £4·1, on a level with the average in Russia ; or in the annual consumption of meat per person : in Great Britain 121 lbs., in Ireland 40 lbs. ; or in the percentage of insane to the population, which is largely a question of the standard of feeding and of general comfort : in England it is 3·3 per thousand, in Scotland 3·8, in Ireland 4·5, the highest ratio in the world. The number of blind and of deaf mutes, also greatly depending on insufficiency of food, is again 50 per cent. higher in Ireland than in England. As a final test, take the primary education of the people. In Ireland it is markedly worse in almost every department than in Great Britain ;¹ the attendance at the schools is only 68 per cent., compared to 82 in England and 94 in Scotland ; the percentage of persons unable to write their names in the marriage-register is 5 in England, 3 in Scotland, but in Ireland 17.² Choose what test we will, every one makes equally plain the inferiority, the stagnation and the distress of Ireland. In the splendid picture of increased material prosperity which the British Empire as a whole presents, Ireland, at our very side, is the one exception, the one dark patch, the one failure of British government.

It is hardly disputed that the means of remedy are,

¹ See Graham Balfour, *The Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland*, pp. xxix, 115–17, 203.

² These figures are mainly collected from Mr. Mulhall's *National Progress in the Queen's Reign*, published in 1897, and from the Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

partially at least, in the power of government—that an active and efficient treatment of the questions of land tenure, housing, education, railway management, agricultural and commercial development, would greatly improve the condition of the Irish people ;¹ on the other hand it is equally clear that the Imperial House of Commons is too over-burdened to allow its treatment of these questions to be active, and too ill-informed of the local conditions, too much out of touch with Irish opinion, to allow its treatment to be efficient. Here, then, is one of the weightiest reasons for the creation of an Irish governing body, specially charged with the work of economic and social reform which the mournful state of Ireland imperatively requires.

The unceasing demand made by the great majority of the Irish people is an additional argument.

This demand is a fact ; inconvenient and unpleasant, perhaps, in the opinion of many Englishmen, but none the less a fact. It cannot be explained away. No talk about agitators and priests will prevent any unbiassed person who has lived in, or has ever visited, Ireland and has mixed with the people, from recognizing that the desire for some form of national government is deep-seated, widespread and genuine. And this would alone constitute a *prima facie* case in favour of conceding the claim ; for if political history teaches anything, it certainly tells us that to reject a demand for freedom when deliberately made by a civilized people, is a wrong policy.

What is the source of this strong national sentiment among the Irish people ? It comes not only from the patriotic desire of the country—a universal desire found in all countries—for a government composed of men of its own race and coloured by its own national ideas. It comes not only from the wish to secure a closer attention to its pressing economic needs. It springs also, and mainly, from sources that originate deep down in the memory of the past.

¹ See, on many of these subjects, the admirable report of the *Recess Committee on Irish Agriculture and Industries*, published by Fisher Unwin, 1896.

A conquered country, Ireland was long treated, not as an integral portion of Britain enjoying the equal favours of the legislature, but rather as a tributary land held for the advantage of the dominant race ; for centuries the laws openly aimed at the subordination of the native people, at the transfer of their lands to the conquerors, at the destruction of every industry that in any way threatened to compete with English agriculture or English trade. A Catholic country, but ruled by a State which held the conversion of all Papists to the principles of the Reformation to be the special task of its piety, Ireland has been the scene of fierce religious persecutions—her bishops and priests proscribed, her Catholic landowners disinherited, no Catholic allowed to teach her children, no child allowed even to be sent abroad for instruction in the doctrines of its parents' Church. Endowed by nature with a soil of great fertility, and peopled by a race naturally industrious, if only the fruits of industry be secured to them, she has been brought by ill-government to such a condition that one of the most patriotic of our statesmen—Lord John Russell—was constrained to say, "We have made Ireland—I speak it deliberately—the most degraded and the most miserable country in the world." Naturally resentful of all this, she has been the theatre of rebellion after rebellion, of one lawless agitation after another, each crushed in turn with bloodshed of her people, and each in turn the occasion or the excuse for fresh measures of repression. Enjoying for nearly five hundred years a national Parliament, she was deprived of it, against her passionate wish, by methods of bribery probably the most shameless that are recorded in the history of any nation. And divided by blood and by religion into two nations, she has long seen, and still sees, almost all the offices of her administrative government filled by members of that section which is alien to the country in sentiment and tradition, and far the smaller in numbers. Is it surprising that with the memory of all this and with the present experience of its results, Ireland should have developed

a strong sentiment of nationality, an earnest desire for a fuller measure of self-government?

Suppose that one man had made another a bankrupt ; had secured his eviction from his home ; had tried to compel him, by threats of further ruin, to become an apostate from his religion ; and, when in revenge he threatened an assault, had had him committed to prison. Suppose, however, that, for some reason of his own, he had afterwards found it expedient to take the man he had oppressed into business partnership, but allowing him powers so small that he could never decide the actions of the firm ; and finding that he was naturally unwilling, had bribed a dishonest lawyer, in whose hands the other had placed a power of attorney, to sign in his name a deed of permanent partnership on those conditions ;—might it not be expected that in the counting-house there should be constant bickering, that the junior partner should show little interest in the prosperity of the business, that his one desire should be for a connection less intimate than that into which he had been forced ? And if the senior were to urge that the past was past, and that now he was receiving a just share of the profits, would it not be natural for the other to answer—“ I am not likely to forget the past, and my own affairs I prefer to manage in my own way ” ? Yet this is no unfair illustration of the former and present relations between England and Ireland.

Englishmen may or may not appreciate the force of the motives that inspire the nationalist sentiment in Ireland. We may perhaps be honestly convinced that we are wiser and more practical than the Irish, and know better what is good for them than they know themselves. We may be honestly sure that the cruelties of earlier days will never be repeated. We may marvel that a people should be so unreasonable as to condemn an admirable system of government on the strength only of great grievances which are past and of present grievances which are small. The fact remains. Whatever be the reasons for the opposition, the existing system of

government in Ireland *is* opposed by a large majority of those subject to it. They would shake it off if they could; it is maintained by the threat of force; and England, who claims the title of liberty-loving, justly priding herself on having planted many free communities in distant parts of the world, should not be the one to turn a deaf ear when a suppliant at her own doors asks for freedom.

There remains what may be termed the Imperial element in the Irish question.

In only one of the wide dominions of the British Empire is disloyalty openly and commonly expressed. Let a time of danger come, and the colonies, the leaders of native India, many of the black races, show an eager and an equal readiness to offer assistance. Those who are the mouthpiece of four-fifths of Ireland alone speak with a different voice. If a discordant note should be heard from any of the colonies, we may be sure that it is the Irish there who strike it. And if the United States of America, the natural allies of Great Britain, hold aloof from her, and again and again reject overtures for closer union, it is the powerful political influence of the Irish emigrants in America which is known to be the main cause.

This hostility cannot be treated as unimportant; and those who are the most impressed by the greatness of the British Empire and have closest at heart its glory, should surely be the first to wish that this element of weakness may be removed.

The disloyalty of a nation never comes from sheer perversity. It is absurd to treat the attitude of Ireland on some theory that "the Irish Adam ate two apples and the people have inherited a double dose of original sin." The enmity clearly has no other source than the dogged refusal of England to grant freedom. The Irish say, So long as you refuse to give us liberty you shall not have our loyalty; and all experience shows that it is futile for England to do nothing but answer, Unless you first show loyalty we will never grant you liberty.

“Never in this world does hatred cease by hatred ;
Hatred ceases by love, this is always its nature.”

Rarely has a civilized nation, deprived of self-government, shown attachment to its rulers, and few, once enjoying it, have failed to render willing service.

England herself has had experience of the two policies and of their results. The majority of her American colonists were Anglo-Saxon in race and Protestant in religion. They were taxed without their consent ; they rose in armed rebellion ; they established a separate sovereignty ; and the secession of the territories that now form the United States was the most serious injury that the Empire has ever suffered. Canada, on the other hand, was Celtic in race and Catholic in religion ; she was seething with discontent ; a wiser generation, guided by a Liberal Ministry, gave a large measure of self-government ; and the Empire has now no member more devoted. The lesson may have been lost on us, but it was not lost on the Canadians themselves ; and British politicians should not forget that the Canadian Parliament, taught by the different histories of its own and the neighbouring country, and moved by its very desire to strengthen the Empire that remains, solemnly petitioned the Imperial Legislature to follow the Canadian precedent rather than that of the American provinces, to adopt the successful policy of Lord Durham rather than the disastrous policy of Lord North, and to grant to the Irish people the reform for which they asked.

We have to recognize the patent fact that the United Kingdom to-day is not in reality a united kingdom. The integrity of the Empire, so far as Ireland and the Irish colonists are concerned, is not a true integrity. And since they refuse to render the Empire's government acceptable to this large body of its subjects, it is the so-called Unionists who make the union unreal, the so-called Loyalists who keep alight the fires of disloyalty, the party usually the loudest in proclaiming its Imperialism which is chiefly responsible for the gravest source of weakness that exists within the Empire.

Such in outline are the reasons, economic, democratic

and imperial, which led the Liberal party to follow Mr. Gladstone in his Irish policy. What are the objections that are offered?

It is said, in the first place, that the Irish are by nature incapable of working representative institutions with success, and that this is proved by the character of the members who are sent from Ireland to Westminster. Are we to hand over the destinies of a country for which we are responsible to such men as those who now sit below the Opposition gangway in the House of Commons? The notion is dismissed as obviously absurd.

It is answered that the evidence is quite insufficient to cause Ireland to be regarded as the one exception to the general rule which prevails throughout Western Europe. The reasons given are ridiculously inadequate if they would have us rank the Irish on a par with those Asiatics and negroes who are held incompetent to rule themselves. If proof to the contrary were needed, Grattan's Parliament and the experience, in the main, of the new County Council administration would be enough to supply it. And with regard to the vagaries of certain of the Irish members at Westminster, two points should be remembered: First, that the distance from Ireland to London, the inconvenience of conducting a private business in one place while attending to political duties in the other, narrows the choice of representatives and makes it difficult to secure the services of the best men that the country possesses; and secondly, that the function of the Irish members, under present circumstances, must needs be less to make laws than to fight for political freedom, and since agitators rather than legislators are needed, it is not surprising that men are chosen who, with the uncompromising force, have often much of the irresponsibility, that belong to the agitator type. The character of an Irish governing body must not be thought to be necessarily the same as that of the delegation which Ireland now sends to London to beg for, to demand, or to extort her freedom.

It is said, again, that there is danger of intolerant legislation in religious matters, of Catholic oppression of the

Protestant minority. It is answered that there is nothing to show that this danger is real, nothing to prove that it is more than a figment, imagined by the timid and exploited by political partisans or by those who are themselves intolerant on the other side ; and further, that the powers which were proposed to be given by Mr. Gladstone's Bills were strictly limited, and carefully guarded against the risk of religious injustice.

It is said, lastly, that since Ireland is disloyal to the Empire, local self-government would lead to separation. A strange doctrine, truly, that by removing the sole cause of the separatist feeling you will be making it more formidable ; that by destroying the one grievance which gave it birth and still gives it nourishment, you will be furnishing, not a final quietus, but added strength ! Let others be blind if they will to the lessons of history. Liberals at least will not cease to believe that the only guarantee of an Empire's unity is the contentedness of the nations that compose it.

With further representative institutions, the wish for a complete separation would no longer exist. Did it still exist, the power to effect it would be wanting. An Irish assembly, such as Mr. Gladstone proposed, would not have had control of a single regiment or a single ship ; it could enter into no negotiations with foreign States ; every one of its measures would be subject to the veto of the Imperial Legislature. It would no more be able to throw off its allegiance than would the Court of Tynwald of the Isle of Man or the States Assembly of the Channel Islands.

To the precedent of Canada and the other colonies which we have quoted, it is often answered that the analogy does not hold, since the separation of Ireland, on account of its geographical situation, would expose England to military and other dangers that are absent in those cases. We may retort that the question is not of the degree of harm that separation would cause, but how separation can best be avoided. Proximity or distance does not affect the argument that the policy which has

made the colonies loyal, and helpful in emergencies, is likely to have the same result in Ireland also.

Some opponents of this reform hide their heads ostrich-fashion in the sand, and think that the Irish agitation for local self-government—continued now for a full century—can be treated as non-existent if only we refuse to see it. Some think that because the danger of separation and of Catholic intolerance have been quoted so often, they must therefore be real, forgetting that no important reform has ever been proposed in England but it was vehemently denounced as the harbinger of disaster. And it is no exaggeration to say that the opposition of some springs from ignorance of the close limitations of the measure proposed; of others, from a mere prejudice against Irish characteristics; of others, from bias against whatever measures are advanced by the Liberal party and were advocated by its late leader, and from a recognition that the Irish question may be made an effective means for excluding Liberals from power. The country is in sad case if the majority of electors allow their action in a matter of first importance to be guided by motives such as these, and prevent, in deference to such arguments, the cure of a grave disease in the imperial body.

Whatever may be the details of the plan by which the reform will finally be effected—and a party is not necessarily tied to the details of former proposals—and however long the time before English opinion consents to the change, the mass of the Liberal party stands, and is likely to stand, firmly attached to the broad policy of Irish local self-government, believing it to be both safe and necessary, essential in the interests of the Empire, in the interests of Ireland herself, and in the interests of the House of Commons, urgently needing relief from excessive burdens of business.

CHAPTER VI

THE MONARCHY

A DEMOCRACY need not be a republic. The Liberal party in England has never aimed at the overthrow of the monarchy. At first sight it might seem, indeed, that the tenure of the most conspicuous office in the State by right of descent is inconsistent with principles of self-government, that hereditary as a title to any post is contrary to the democratic rule that preferment should go by merit; yet the powers of the Crown are now so circumscribed that few and small practical evils arise, while many serious inconveniences are avoided, by maintaining the constitutional monarchy which the past of our country has evolved.

If some of the forms of democracy are abandoned, the essentials are safe. Claims to divine right and absolute power are no longer even whispered. The functions of the Crown are neither legislative nor administrative; except in informal and indirect ways, they are little more than ceremonial. Just as the sovereign is the titular head of the army but does not direct its campaigns, and the titular head of the Church but does not decide its doctrine, so he is the titular head of the State without controlling its policy; and only pedants would wish, for the sake of a logical symmetry, to carry a revolutionary change, which would on the one hand remedy no real grievance, but on the other hand open the door to many grave difficulties.

There is a saying of Cornewall Lewis, "The constitutional King is King in order that no one else may be King;" and the system we have is acceptable if only

because it saves the nation from the troublesome task of deciding who shall play the part of the symbol of the State. Our politics, further, must be largely influenced by the fact that the government of these islands is also the supreme government of a hundred barbarous peoples, whose minds are accustomed to the idea of personal loyalty but can seldom understand the abstraction of republican forms : that the monarchy is one of the bonds of Empire. And the monarchy is picturesque. Life, to many, is drab enough ; a little purple and gold is not unwelcome, and a constitution may err on the side of a too strict utilitarianism. We would not have the State be like an anatomical diagram, all muscles and sinews, without the finish of features and complexion. Lastly, to set out on a republican campaign would mean the postponement of all other reforms, since the motive force of progress is limited and only a certain quantity of large change can be accomplished in a given time. It would be sacrificing the essential to the unessential.

Hence men of common-sense, however democratic, would be intolerant of republican movements if any were attempted. Liberals would keep within due bounds the somewhat heavy burdens which royalty lays on the national finances. But so long as the limits of the prerogative are so carefully observed, and the fact that in a free country true kingship is not rule but the lead in service, is so willingly realized, as they have been in recent years by the British royal House, those who are reformers in other things are unlikely to show any active wish for a change in this. And accepting the monarchy in principle, they do not refuse to accept its implications. Loyal above all to the people, they are ready to feel, and express, a loyalty also to a throne which is rooted in the history and dignified by the traditions of a thousand years, which adds something to the efficiency of the State and to the attractiveness of the national life, while it leaves undiminished the real powers of self-government.

PART IV
IMPERIAL AND FOREIGN POLICY

CHAPTER I

IMPERIALISM OR ANTI-IMPERIALISM?

WHAT is the attitude of Liberalism to the problems of empire? More than a fifth part of the land area of the earth, more than a fourth part of its population, are now subject to British rule. Is this a fact to rejoice in or a fact to be deplored? Do Liberals regard the empire as an incubus to be thrown off as soon as may be, or as a precious possession to be jealously preserved, or again as a nucleus for a dominion yet more extensive? Is England the guardian of liberty, and the apostle of civilization, that her sons are accustomed to think her; or is she the grasping, tyrannous power that her enemies denounce, suppressing the freedom of vast populations in order to exploit their labour and trade for her own mercenary purposes, and disturbing the peace of the world by aiming at an ultimate universal supremacy?

We cannot escape such questions as these. We cannot evade them by saying that the empire is a fact, that its growth is irresistible, that it is our "fate" to be an imperial people, that the annexation of territories is really a kind of kleptomania impossible for us to control. If the empire were, as some assert, harmful to itself and to the world, no plea of "manifest destiny," and no appeal to established facts, would free the nation from responsibility for the evil, or the Liberal party from the duty of throwing itself across the tendencies of the time, and, no matter at what temporary cost in popularity, adopting an attitude frankly anti-Imperialist. But if, on the other hand, the empire be useful, politicians who neglected its interests would be discarding a powerful

force for good. Clearly, we must make up our minds one way or the other.

For some time past, the Liberal party has notoriously been drawn in opposite ways by those, on the one hand, who carry on the traditions, in external politics, of the Manchester School, and on the other hand by those who have imbibed the doctrines of Imperialism. Different teachers have preached different principles. There has been a period of disunion, discussion and doubt. Yet it seems, if the position be analyzed, that the main body of Liberals are substantially agreed. It appears possible to state clear principles and definite lines of policy to which all but an insignificant fraction of extremists would subscribe. The difficulty of applying the leading principles of Liberalism to imperial questions is not, perhaps, so large as is sometimes supposed.

But the controversy has revealed one fact at least which no one will dispute—that the empire brings neither good alone nor harm alone; it both confers some advantages and entails some drawbacks, to the mother-country, to the self-governing colonies, and to the native territories. And each of the two sides of the account must be carefully valued in turn before any attempt can be made to strike a balance and reach a conclusion.

CHAPTER II

DISADVANTAGES OF EMPIRE

A SELF-CONTAINED country can give all its political energies to improve the condition of its people. A country like England, the centre of an empire, must devote no small part of its energies to the affairs of distant dependencies. With the growth of an empire come wars, risks of war, difficulties of administration—exciting incidents that eclipse the humdrum work of social and constitutional reform. Hardly a year passes but the nation is disturbed by some complication in Siam or Newfoundland, in Afghanistan or China, in Venezuela or South Africa. An Egyptian question or a Transvaal question will disorganize for long periods the ordinary work of the State. Progressive ministries are often forced to postpone measures of domestic reform because of the pressure of imperial concerns, and reactionary ministries can keep their place by covering their failures at home with what are regarded as successes abroad. That the thoughts of the nation should be constantly diverted from the urgent needs of Great Britain and Ireland, by the claims of Asia and Africa, must be acknowledged to be a serious disadvantage brought by the empire to the mother-country.

Not only political energy is diverted. The more extended are our frontiers, and the more numerous our points of contact with other powers, the more frequent become the occasions for friction; the likelihood of war is increased at the same time that the area of territory needing defence is increased; every new boundary between our own possessions and those of other European nations is both a possible cause of quarrel and a possible scene of attack; the growth of empire must therefore involve a growth of defensive armament, and for this

the outlying districts can seldom afford to pay. A constant succession of military expeditions has been needed, also, to conquer or hold the territories abroad. The rapid increase in the cost of the British navy can, it is true, be only partially attributed to this cause. Were the empire dissolved, although the occasions for war might be fewer, the risk of war would remain; England would still need to be secure of the sea in order to protect in time of war her commerce from destruction, her ports from blockade, and her people from starvation; and the size of her navy is fixed far less by the size of the empire than by the size of the fleets that might be brought against her.¹ But the vast growth in the annual cost of the army is solely due to imperial needs, and the large expenditure on colonial wars must be put to the same account. Within the last fifteen years, the additions to the army have involved an increased charge of no less than fifteen millions a year, or 100 per cent.; and

¹ The expenditure on the thirty thousand troops who are employed in normal years to garrison the naval stations must be put in the same category as the expenditure on the navy itself, for the fortified coaling-stations and dockyards are as necessary for naval efficiency in time of war as the ships themselves.

The troops stationed in India and Egypt are maintained, of course, at the cost of the local revenues.

The grants-in-aid to various dependencies, which are sometimes spoken of as though they involved a serious burden, amount to no considerable sum. In 1898, a fairly typical year, the items were as follows—

	£
British Protectorates in Uganda, } Central and East Africa, etc. }	267,000
Colonial " " (Supplementary Estimates)	256,000
Colonial Services, including South Africa	353,000
" " (Supplementary Estimates)	139,000
Cyprus Grant-in-Aid	33,000
Slave Trade Services	1,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies	75,000
	1,124,000

And against this we must in fairness reckon the profit from the Suez Canal shares, which the British Government bought for reasons of Imperial policy. The shares cost £4,000,000. The annual charge for this at 3 per cent. would be £120,000, but the yield in 1898 was £698,000, giving a profit of £578,000. This covers half the entire amount of these colonial charges.

the military expeditions in recent times have cost on the average nearly one million a year in addition, apart from the immense and exceptional expenditure on the South African War.¹ That these vast sums should be spent on armaments and wars while the educational system at home is starved, while the conditions of employment remain in many ways hurtful, while bad surroundings are left unimproved, and the deserving poor are insufficiently relieved, is for the British people no small off-set to the benefits of Imperial greatness.

We turn to the self-governing colonies. The gain they

¹ Votes of credit for Colonial Wars, or for Military Preparations made necessary by disputes on Imperial questions, 1869-1899.

		£
1869	Abyssinian Expedition . . .	1,300,000
1873	Ashantee Expedition . . .	800,000
1874	" " " " " " . . .	125,000
1878	War in South Africa . . .	1,844,000
	Abyssinian Expedition . . .	17,000
1879	Wars in South Africa . . .	3,245,000
1880	Transvaal War . . .	656,000
	Afghan War; grant in aid to India . . .	500,000
	Zulu, etc., Wars . . .	135,000
1882	Egyptian War . . .	3,895,000
	Second Afghan grant . . .	500,000
	Transvaal . . .	14,000
1883	Egyptian War . . .	381,000
	Third Afghan grant . . .	1,000,000
1884	Egypt . . .	2,588,000
	Fourth Afghan grant . . .	250,000
	Bechuanaland Expedition . . .	725,000
1885	Russo-Afghan dispute; preparations . . .	9,450,000
	Fifth Afghan grant . . .	250,000
1896	Indian troops at Suakin . . .	145,000
Total for thirty years		27,820,000

(*Financial Reform Almanac*, 1899, p. 17.)

To this must be added the cost of the South African War. There have also been frequent grants in the ordinary accounts for similar expenditure, such as the £500,000 in 1898 for the Soudan Expedition.

derive from their connection with the empire may be large. But they find that in two ways the connection is prejudicial to them.

Self-governing up to a point, they have still the status of colonies. The position of free, sovereign States is denied them. The acts of their Parliaments are subject to the veto of one minister in London, the whole of their foreign policy is conducted by another. They are constitutionally dependent on a distant power. Although the winters of Canada, the dearth of water in Australia, and the barren soil of a large part of South Africa seem likely to prevent their rivalling the United States in rapid growth of population, can we doubt that a time will come when these communities will be great enough to resent such dependence, if it be still maintained, as the United States would now resent it had they remained British Colonies? When the promptings are felt of a stronger ambition to take an equal place among the nations of the world, membership in the empire must be something very different from what it is to-day if the colonies are not to feel it a yoke instead of a privilege.

The second disadvantage is recognized to be of comparatively less importance, but we often find it mentioned in colonial writings and speeches. To be connected with England is to be connected not only with her present greatness but with her future quarrels as well. A citizen who builds his house in the neighbourhood of a fort is liable to share in the unpleasantnesses of a bombardment, and a people which unites its fortunes with those of a European power not greatly beloved by its neighbours, may at any moment find itself involved in a dispute which it has neither caused nor has any direct interest in maintaining. That an English quarrel about the boundaries of Venezuela, the independence of Siam or the neutrality of Belgium, might bring a hostile fleet to the coast of Australia or New Zealand, or a military raid into the towns of Canada, is a danger which the colonist, reviewing his political position, must take into serious account.

There remain the yet graver disadvantages to the

native peoples, the races who form by far the most numerous body of the subjects of the King.

Many Englishmen are accustomed to speak of the British Empire as a community of free, self-governing nations, as an expansion of the English people, a Greater Britain. The description applies to a part only of the empire, and a part which, although predominant in influence, is comparatively insignificant in population. If, in some Lord Mayor's procession, it were proposed to march through the streets a body of men chosen so as to illustrate the comparative numbers of the peoples of the empire, in every eighty of those men seven would be inhabitants of Great Britain, one would be an Irishman, one a Canadian, one an Australasian, one would represent the Europeans in South Africa, the West Indies and other smaller colonies, and no fewer than sixty-nine would be native Asiatics and native Africans. The empire is more an expansion of English rule than an expansion of the English people. It is a mixture in which the community of free English-speaking peoples forms a one-eighth part; the other seven-eighths are alien in race, language and civilization, and are governed for the most part on autocratic lines.

Excellent as the motives undoubtedly are that animate the rule of this larger portion of the British dominion, the truth remains that the empire has involved for all the native peoples subjection, for some of them extinction, for others a partial degradation; and the more genuine is our desire for their welfare, the more frankly we should recognize the reality of their grievances.

They lose the privilege of self-government. Whatever national freedom existed is extinguished, either wholly or in part. Sometimes circumstances have brought a voluntary surrender; more often there has been armed conquest. They see foreign officials sitting in the seats, or controlling the actions, of their native rulers, and their whole country placed under the armed domination of an alien and distant power.

To the Indians of America, the aborigines of Australia, the natives of Fiji and other Polynesian islands, the empire has brought, or is gradually bringing, the loss not only of political independence but of racial existence itself. Slowly extinguished through the wars and diseases that have come with the advent of white men, the history of these disappearing peoples strikes a melancholy note among the pæans in praise of civilized rule.

Other peoples, whose numbers and vitality preserve them from extinction, are without question often demoralized by the sudden contact with Western ideas. Their ancient rules of conduct, which, though primitive, may be fairly efficacious, are undermined; for long periods no others are substituted; and nothing is more common than to hear from those who have been in close contact with the natives of many of our dependencies, that the vices of the Europeans are adopted rather than their virtues, that the hasty veneer of civilization is more repulsive in many ways than the roughness of frank barbarism, and that the new *régime* seems to leave the individual native poorer in manliness and morality than it found him.

The demoralization is greatest, of course, among those peoples whose religion does not forbid, and whose subjection to British rule facilitates, the consumption of cheap European liquors. This evil is indisputable and most grave. "The notorious gin trade," says Mr. Joseph Thomson, the eminent African explorer, "is a scandal and a shame, well worthy to be classed with the detested slave trade. We talk of civilizing the negro, and we pour into his country an incredible quantity of gin and rum . . . driving him deeper into the slough of depravity . . . ruining him both body and soul."¹ True as it is that many forms of intoxicants

¹ Quoted in *The Liquor Traffic in Africa*, published by the Aborigines' Protection Society, 1895. Compare also the statement, quoted in the same pamphlet, of Sir George Goldie, the chief of our modern "empire-builders" in West Africa: "I have long been convinced that the whole African movement will end in failure unless European spirits are practically excluded. The enormous increase in the liquor traffic in our West African possessions during

were used by the negroes before the advent of Englishmen, the deluging of a large part of Africa with immense additional supplies of cheap and deleterious spirits has been a feature in the development of that continent which has worked unquestionable and incalculable mischief.

There are other phases of Western civilization the extension of which to outlying regions cannot be viewed without misgiving. The Indian or the Kaffir who is induced to leave the labour of his fields to work in the cotton-mill or the gold-mine may gain increased earnings, but it is doubtful whether meantime he gains increased happiness, and if the empire carries with it some of the bad features of our own industrial system, it may not be so unalloyed a blessing as many suppose.

Few candid observers fail to testify that, apart from general causes of deterioration, the subjection of the black man to the white brings with it not a few cases of individual oppression. Men who cannot be accused either of bias or of sentimentality are compelled to emphasize the fact. Long ago Merivale spoke of "the wretched details of the ferocity and treachery which have marked the conduct of civilized men, too often of civilized governments, in their relations with savages."¹ General Gordon put the point in rhetorical fashion when he said that "the English pioneers in Africa need civilizing more than the blacks." "The average white in South Africa," Mr. Bryce goes so far as to say, "considers the native to exist solely for his own benefit. He is harsh or gentle according to his own temper; but,

the last three or four years, owing to the establishment of peace in the interior, is an object lesson which cannot be too strongly or frequently impressed on public opinion in this country."

In 1890 no less than 3,573,849 gallons of gin and rum were imported into the British possessions in West Africa. In 1894 the total had risen to 5,203,925. See the Colonial Office Return, British West African Colonies (Importation of Spirits) 1897. (The figures in the earlier total relating to the Niger Coast Protectorate are those of the year August 1, 1891 to July 31, 1892, no statistics for 1890 being available for that part of West Africa.)

¹ Herman Merivale, *On Colonization* (published in 1841), p. 487.

whether harsh or gentle, he is apt to think of the black man much as he thinks of an ox, and to ignore a native's rights when they are inconvenient to himself." ¹

Sir George Campbell, again, one of the most distinguished of Indian administrators, wrote not many years ago: "The abuses of the Polynesian labour traffic are beyond doubt; there is nothing in modern times more shocking." ² We have the evidence of the Commissioner appointed by the Colonial Office to inquire into the causes of the Matabele war of 1896, to show that the British South Africa Company had confiscated the cattle of the natives and had enforced on them compulsory labour in the mines; ³ and occasional cases of flagrant oppression in Western Australia, North Queensland, Bechuanaland and the West Coast of Africa have also been recently proved beyond dispute. There is unhappily little room to doubt that when men, who are neither better nor worse than the average Englishman at home, are placed in positions of almost despotic power over people of greatly inferior type, are removed far from the influence of an educated public opinion and beyond reach of the direct control of a watchful government, they seem sometimes to develop, not merely an unsympathetic and contemptuous attitude towards the native, but an entirely different code of morality from that which prevails at home; an easy, cynical code that omits many of the first rules of humanity and justice. The fact is certain that the expansion of the British Empire has brought many millions of Africans and Asiatics under the influence of planters, traders, company promoters, adventurers of all kinds, some of whom—though of course not the whole, nor yet, probably, the majority—ignore the rights of the black man, neglect his interests, and treat him as a being created for no other

¹ *Impressions of South Africa*, p. 463. Compare a striking passage in Sir Charles Dilke's *Problems of Greater Britain*, i. 527.

² *The British Empire*, p. 158.

³ Report of Sir E. R. Martin, K.C.M.G., on the *Native Administration of the British South Africa Company*, pp. 6, 9. (Blue-Book C. 8547 of 1897.)

end than to minister to the comfort of the white and to serve his financial interests.

To the world outside the empire its rapid growth introduces an element of disturbance. The distribution of power has been altered. One member of the sisterhood of nations has gained largely on the others in dominion and grandeur. The continuous expansion of England is viewed with envy and suspicion by the other powers. In no small degree it is responsible for the spirit of unrest that now pervades the world, endangering the general peace and with it our own security.

These, then, are the disadvantages that come from empire. They are real disadvantages. The Imperialist may say that they are outweighed by other considerations; he cannot honestly deny that they exist and are serious. They have caused some Englishmen, whose temperament has led them to regard this side of the picture alone, to form an antipathy to the empire and all its works. If the empire diverts attention from home reforms, if it entails fresh burdens of armaments, if it keeps the colonies in tutelage and may engage them in wars with which they have little concern, if it robs the less civilized races of their freedom, leads sometimes to their extinction, introduces among them demoralizing influences and makes them liable to oppression, and if it disturbs the quiet of the world at large, its existence must be a source not of pride, but of profound regret. Further expansion should be rigidly forbidden. No sacrifices should be made for the sake of a dominion in itself pernicious. The most logical of this school go further. "It will be a happy day," wrote Cobden, "when England has not an acre of territory in continental Asia." "In my opinion," he said on another occasion, "it is for the interest of both England and Canada that we should as speedily as possible sever the political thread by which

we are as communities united.”¹ Although there are now very few who, taking this extreme view, would work for the dissolution of the empire or for a contraction of its area, there are without question a certain number of politicians who regard its maintenance as at best an unfortunate necessity. They grudge its claims, they are pessimistic of its future, they will take no hearty interest in its present problems; if its rights are attacked they are apathetic in their defence; if an extension is proposed, no matter under what circumstances, they are strenuous in opposition.

But the Liberal party as a whole has never consented to accept a view which takes into account only one-half of the facts; it refuses to ignore that, if the disadvantages of the empire are real, there are real advantages also.

¹ See Mr. Morley's *Life of Cobden*, pp. 430 and 604 (1883 edition).

CHAPTER III

ADVANTAGES OF EMPIRE

FROM the vast territories of the empire come unlimited supplies of the goods needed by our people ; they form a colossal market for the products we send in exchange ; and among the material benefits which the empire brings to the mother-country the opening of important channels of new trade must be counted the chief. We have only to enter the average workman's home to see the economic results of British expansion. Clothes made from the wool of Australia and the cotton of India or Egypt ; boots manufactured from the hides of South Africa, soap from the palm-oil of Nigeria ; oil for his lamp and tobacco for his pipe brought from those British colonies that are now the United States of America ; New Zealand meat, bread made of Canadian flour, rice from Burmah, condiments from the Straits Settlements, tea from Ceylon or Assam, and cocoa from the West Indies ; furniture made from timber that has grown by the banks of the St. Lawrence—we should find that every tenement or cottage is a museum of products from a fourth part of the globe. If these distant territories had been left derelict or hostile, if a European power had neglected to colonize them, to make them orderly and secure, and to open their resources by roads and railways and harbours, there is no labourer in our towns or villages but would now be the poorer ; commodities in daily use in the humblest homes would be unknown, or unattainable except by the richest ; and the people of the British Islands would have been long ago impoverished, as the increasing population pressed on the

limited supplies of food and clothing that Europe could furnish, and the prices of necessities consequently rose.

All parts of the nation gain in prosperity from these imports; the exports sent in exchange give occupation and livelihood to no small proportion of it. Many hundreds of thousands of British workmen are engaged in producing goods for shipment to the colonies, the dependencies and the United States. Did this trade not exist, how should these men exist? Our country would be poorer in men, or if the population had reached its present numbers, a part of it would have been sunk in a chronic and hopeless destitution.

No less than one-half of the vast over-sea commerce of England is carried on with countries which were practically unknown three centuries ago, and have been opened to trade during that period through her own Imperial expansion and that of other European States. The annual value of this commerce is nearly four hundred millions of pounds.¹ Trade, of course, does not always follow the flag. The expansion of the continental powers has been of infinite service to English commerce. Our merchants carry on a great business with the colonies of France, Portugal and Holland, and with the old colonies of Spain. But the idea that the total of England's trade would be much the same as it now stands if she had left the commercial development of the backward countries wholly to the hands of other European States, is disproved by the statistics. / If trade does not necessarily follow the flag, to some extent it

¹ Exports of the Produce and Manufactures of the United Kingdom, and Imports to the United Kingdom 1898.

All countries	£703,737,000
"New countries:" (<i>i.e.</i> British Possessions, United States, Central and South American Republics, Congo Free State, Hayti and San Domingo, Possessions of Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Portugal and Spain)	£374,000,000 (exact total.)

(Extracted from the Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions, 1899; issued by the Customs House Department.)

follows the language, and to a great extent it takes the paths where it will find the lowest tariffs and the most efficient government; and it is a very striking fact that our commerce with countries colonized or governed by the continental races is only one-third as large, per head of their population, as our trade with countries colonized or governed by ourselves.¹ /

¹ In the first category are the present possessions of Germany, France, Holland, Portugal, Denmark, Belgium and Spain, with the Central and South American Republics; in the second category are the British possessions and the United States. No statistics are available for Russian possessions in Asia.

	Population.	Trade with the United Kingdom, 1898.	Trade with the United Kingdom, per million inhabitants.
Non-European . . . countries controlled by continental races	185,000,000	£ 50,363,000	£ 270,000
Non-European . . . countries controlled by Anglo-Saxon race	407,000,000	323,637,000	795,000

If the United States be left out of the account the proportion would still stand as follows—

	Population.	Trade with the United Kingdom, 1898.	Trade per million inhabitants.
Non-European . . . countries controlled by continental races	185,000,000	£ 50,363,000	£ 270,000
British possessions .	345,000,000	182,859,000	527,000

We might add a third category, our trade with the chief non-European countries which are still under native governments—Turkey in Asia, Morocco, Persia, Siam, China, Japan and the Pacific Islands.

(The trade of Hong-Kong may be most fairly included with that of China.)

[P.T.O.]

And in considering this side of the empire's advantages we have to take into account not only the trade that now exists, but also the infinite possibilities of future growth. Many of the territories of the empire have been only recently acquired and are imperfectly settled. The experience of England and France has, indeed, by no means borne out the fancy of the Elizabethan adventurers that "The Niger flows over golden sands and Timbuctu is paved with precious stones," but there are few of their dependencies which, wisely governed, do not promise in time a valuable return in the more solid elements of well-being.¹ "A plantation," said Bacon, "is like the planting of woods, for you must make a count to lose almost twenty years' profit and expect your recompense at the end." Business men do not doubt that, since a well-directed expenditure of colonizing, governing

	Population.	Trade with the United Kingdom, 1898.	Trade per million inhabitants.
Non-European . . . countries under native governments. . . .	480,531,000	£25,481,000	£53,030

We thus reach this conclusion—

Trade of United Kingdom with non-European countries—

Under native governments . £53,000 per million of inhabitants.

Controlled by continental

 races £270,000 " " "

Controlled by England . £527,000 " " "

Controlled by Anglo-Saxon

 race £795,000 " " "

(The statistics of population have been taken from the *Statesman's Year Book*, 1899, the statistics of trade from the Customs House Return already referred to.)

Another calculation has been made by Prof. Flux which shows that the French possessions send 60 per cent. of their trade, approximately, to their mother country and her other colonies, the Dutch possessions 70 per cent., the Portuguese 50 per cent., the German 40 per cent., and the British 65 per cent. ("The Flag and Trade," by A. W. Flux, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, September 1899.)

¹ See note, opposite page.

and commercial energy has rarely failed in the past to win a return from even a barren soil, extended to the new territories and continued in the old, it will still further increase in the future the inestimable boons of expanding trade which have already come to the British people from the growth of the British Empire.

✓ A second economic advantage to the English people is the opportunity which the empire gives to those of them who wish to seek their fortunes abroad, to emigrate without

¹ The following recent instances are striking—

IMPORTS FROM AND EXPORTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	1857	1897
Gold Coast (and Hinterland)	£166,000	£1,192,000
Sierra Leone "	233,000	566,000
Gambia "	178,000	132,000
Lagos "	—	974,000
	£577,000	£2,864,000

	1883	1897
Perak (Straits Settlements)	\$9,936,000	\$24,517,000
Selangor (do.)	3,779,000	23,653,000

	1885	1897
British North Borneo	\$1,049,000	\$4,829,000

(Statistical Abstract of the Colonial and other Possessions of the United Kingdom, 1899).

The foreign trade of India has increased *fourteen-fold* in sixty-three years, from Rx. 14,342,000 in 1834-5, to Rx. 198,972,000 in 1897-8.

In the commerce with the West African colonies the trade in spirits forms only a fraction of the whole.

losing their nationality, or finding themselves surrounded in their new home by alien institutions. A third is the outlet allowed for the profitable investment of surplus capital. A stable government established in new countries permits British money to be used in the development of natural products of all kinds, out of the sale of which a legitimate interest is paid on the capital, and a valuable revenue is drawn by the nation which provides it.✓

✓ In several ways the resources of England for purposes of defence are strengthened by the existence of the empire. The number of men available for military or naval service is increased. The ten millions of Englishmen living in the colonies, the fresh millions added every generation, the superiority of their physique to that of the town populations of Europe, may prove factors of supreme importance in a national emergency ;✓ and the contribution of nearly seventy thousand colonial soldiers to the army serving in the South African war¹ indicates clearly enough the probable value of this resource in any even more serious conflict that might unhappily occur.²

The insecurity of her food-supply is admitted to be one of the chief strategic weaknesses in England's position. The soil of the United Kingdom produces only one-fifth of the food needed by the population. If the outside sources of supply were wholly in the hands of alien governments, and liable to be closed by them in the event of a conflict, the result would inevitably be famine. From this danger the growth of the empire has in large measure relieved us, by placing a great part of the North American continent in the control of a people

¹ Mr. Chamberlain stated the total to be sixty-eight thousand in his speech at the Guildhall, December 12, 1901.

² Population of Russia, 1851, 68,000,000 ; 1897, 129,000,000.

„ „ Germany, 1858, 37,000,000 ; 1900, 56,000,000.

„ „ United Kingdom, 1851, 27,000,000 ; 1901,
41,500,000.

“The time is not far distant when it will be possible for a federated Australia to throw a hundred thousand armed men into India at any critical period which may occur.” (*The Melbourne Leader*, November 19, 1893.)

of British origin, and by keeping under our own flag vast areas of production in all quarters of the globe.

And again, the empire furnishes the naval stations which are indispensable to a fleet defending commercial routes; by surrounding many of those stations with large friendly populations, it greatly increases their power of resistance to hostile attack.

If the self-governing colonies remain, as they do, loyal and attached members of the empire, showing no wish to make the stroke of the pen that would suffice, without need of the sword, to sever their connection with England, it can only be because the empire brings to them also large benefits, benefits which they hold to outweigh the drawbacks it still involves.

The colonies forego their national independence; but in exchange they hold a place in the most illustrious of confederations. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, insignificant powers of the third rank if separated from the empire, now take the status and share in the achievements of the greatest political organization that the world has known. The humblest colonist on the lonely sheep-run is able to feel that he is one with the millions of Englishmen throughout the globe. He participates in their patriotism. The consciousness of British nationality permeates and dignifies his life; and the most valuable gift that the empire bestows upon him is the privilege of sharing in the common traditions of past renown and the common efforts for present success in every honourable sphere of human activity. The colonies know that they are greater as colonies than they would be as states.

And if they are subject to the distant risk of being involved in the quarrels of the Imperial Government, in return they enjoy the protection of the Imperial forces. The British navy defends their interests as well as England's. If they separated, they would at once find themselves faced by this dilemma; either they must be dependent on the forbearance and submissive to the

aggressions of foreign powers, and this their pride would not permit ; or else they must enter into a competition of armaments, costing far more than their resources would allow. From this dilemma their membership in the empire saves them.

Further, it guarantees them from all risk of attack from one another ; and such wars as those between Servia and Bulgaria or Chile and Peru, separated parts of the Turkish and Spanish Empires, are impossible in their case. Finally, the colonies imperatively need for their prosperity a large and cheap supply of imported capital. Australasia, for instance, with a population of only five millions, would be quite unable to develop her resources, and carry on her vast trade without the aid of much borrowed money. Loans at cheap rates are impossible unless the lender has confidence in the borrower's stability. Englishmen hold the largest stores of loanable capital, and Englishmen have most confidence in the States that are sheltered by their own flag and characterized by their own institutions. The colonies' membership in the empire brings them, as borrowers, a great advantage, and for economic reasons, as well as for reasons of national patriotism and military security, they have a powerful motive to maintain the Imperial connection.

///L
To the coloured races also the empire gives large benefits. Few intelligent men among the native subjects, in territories, even, that have had no more than a generation's experience of British rule, fail to support with genuine loyalty the government of which they find themselves a part, and the most sincere friends in this country of the native peoples, however strongly they may criticize particular phases of British administration, seldom express any wish that the administration itself should be withdrawn.

If the independence of these peoples disappears, barbarism goes with it, and the loss of national is counterbalanced by the growth of personal liberty.

Turbulence is replaced by peace and stagnation by progress, and native governments that often possessed every element of badness, are exchanged for a rule which, if alien, is probably the most efficient that mankind has yet developed. ✓ To the Indian, the empire has brought relief from the race wars, the religious wars, the dynastic wars, the plundering expeditions and brigandage which were formerly the rule in almost all parts of Hindustan. He is subject to law instead of to the capricious tyranny of princes. Famine and plague are sometimes forestalled and are largely relieved.¹ And not least among the boons conferred on India is the opening of new lands to give room to her crowded populations.² The Egyptian is no longer hindered in his difficult fight against nature by a corrupt and inefficient government, or exposed to the constant and destructive attacks of outlaws, and the yet more constant and destructive exactions of unscrupulous tax-gatherers. During the brief period of English control in Egypt, the cotton crop, the staple of its commerce, has been doubled, the sugar crop has been trebled, while, on the other hand, the amount of crime has been halved; the system of forced labour on government works has been abolished

¹ If, at this moment, the condition of the Indian people is far from satisfactory, still ameliorative measures are always at work. As showing the difference in results between native and British administration, it is interesting to note that, between 1891 and 1901, a decade that included two great famines, the population of the Indian native States decreased by 4·3 per cent., while the population of the British Indian provinces increased by 4·4 per cent. (Census of India, 1901.)

² In their own midst through irrigation, and, for emigrants, in Ceylon, Assam, Mauritius, the West Indies, and many parts of Africa. Indeed the opening of the less populated parts of the tropics and sub-tropics to the emigration of the more crowded parts is one of the most remarkable, although one of the least noticed, of the results of British expansion. It seems possible that Africa may become to India what North America and Australia have been to England. Already there are very large numbers of Indian traders, agriculturists, artisans, and labourers seeking their fortunes in British East and Central Africa, and many authorities look forward to a very considerable movement along these lines. (See especially Sir Harry Johnston, *The Colonization of Africa*, p. 281.)

(with the single exception of emergency work on the dykes), yet taxation has been lowered by 20 per cent.; and there can be no more striking illustration of the comparative effects of civilized and uncivilized government than the fact that under Mahdist rule the population of the Soudan is estimated to have been reduced in eighteen years by a half, while under British rule, in the same period, the population of Egypt was increased by nearly an equal proportion.¹ The negro under English administration, where it has been firmly established, is freed from the constant fear of slave-traders' raids that were the terror of village life in a large part of Africa, hanging over the people as an always threatening calamity;² cannibalism and human sacrifice have disappeared, or are quickly disappearing; witchcraft, "which is the cause of more African deaths than anything else, which has killed and still kills more men and women than the slave-trade,"³ is also becoming a thing of the past; the unceasing slaughter of individuals at the arbitrary order of the chiefs has been summarily stopped; and the devastating tribal wars, which have again and again laid waste vast districts and often uprooted the beginnings of civilization, have ceased their ravages.⁴ And in every dependency

¹ See Sir Alfred Milner (now Lord Milner), *England in Egypt*; and an article by Mr. Arthur Nichols, the Secretary of the Bank of Egypt, on "What England has done for Egypt," published in the volume on British Africa, in the useful *British Empire Series* (Kegan Paul).

² Sir F. Lugard, lately Administrator of Uganda, quotes authorities to show that the number of slaves captured and taken to the East Coast of Africa alone, was, quite recently, not less than 100,000 a year. (*The Rise of our East African Empire*, i. 199.)

³ Miss Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 315. In 1856-7 the Kosas, a South African tribe, were ordered by their wizards to kill their cattle and destroy their grain, for the reason that the ghosts of their ancestors were coming to help them in their wars and to provide them with a race of cattle exempt from rinderpest. They obeyed, and between twenty-five and thirty thousand people died of starvation in consequence. (Johnston, *Colonization of Africa*, p. 171; Bryce, *Impressions of South Africa*, p. 113.)

⁴ It is difficult to realize the wholesale nature of the destruction caused by these wars, or to estimate at its full value the relief that has come from their suppression. Four instances, among a score

where the new government has been fully established, with few, and we may hope temporary, exceptions, an honest magistracy gives equal justice ; an effective police protects life and property ; schools are opened ; hospitals relieve the sick ; roads, railways, plantations, irrigation

that could be given, may be quoted. Mr. Bryce, describing the conquest of the Makalakas by the Matabili (*Impressions of South Africa*, p. 300 ; see also p. 118), says : " For more than half a century slaughter and pillage reigned over a tract of some ninety thousand square miles. Much of this tract . . . was well peopled by tribes who lived quietly, had plenty of cattle, and tilled the soil. . . . They were now mercilessly raided by the Matabili till large districts were depopulated and left desolate." " Further to the north," says Mr. Bryce again (p. 321), " is a less elevated region, remarkable for the traces it bears of having been at one time densely populated. Tillage was so extensive that the very hillsides were built up into terraces planted with crops. To-day there are hardly any inhabitants, for a good many years ago Mzila, the father of Gungunhana, chief of a fierce and powerful tribe which lives on the lower course of the Sabi river, raided all this country, and in successive invasions killed off or chased away the whole population. Such wholesale slaughter and devastation is no uncommon thing in the annals of South Africa." " It may be doubted," says Mr. Lucas in his *Historical Geography of the British Colonies* (vol. iv. part I. p. 191), " whether at any time or in any place could be found a record of such wholesale extermination as was wrought directly or indirectly, by Chaka and his Zulu warriors in the first thirty years of the present century. Tribe after tribe was overpowered and massacred. The fertile, thickly-peopled districts of Natal were desolated . . . and not far short of a million human beings are supposed to have been blotted out."

" Surely," says Sir F. Lugard (*The Rise of our East African Empire*, i. 87), " people in England will presently begin to realize that the Arab slave-raider is not the only curse of Africa, but is rivalled by the awful and intolerable tyranny of the dominant tribe. It is from this tyranny, no less than from the slaver, that our administration, and the dawn of an era of law and order, is to deliver the more peaceable and industrious agricultural tribes of Africa. Each district has its own dominant tribe, which lives its day and gives place to another : in Nyasaland the Angoni, in British East Africa the Masai. Here is a description (one of many) of a recent traveller from Africa (Commander Dundas, R.N.), relative to the doings of the Masai—

" On our return through the Mbé country, a most harrowing sight presented itself ; what only a few days before were prosperous villages, standing amid fields of grain, were now smoking ruins ;

works are made; commerce brings new comforts and new means of livelihood to the people; the standard of living rises. The growth of population is the surest sign of successful government, and the largely increased, or rapidly increasing, numbers of the people in India, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Egypt, and Western, Central, and Southern Africa, are the best proof of their greater prosperity. Everywhere, too, English rule unlocks the fetters of ignorance, opens wide the gates of European civilization, and shows the way to the knowledge of Western sciences and arts, religion and philosophy, to peoples whose isolation had left them unbenefited by the experience of the most active and most successful portions of the human race. We know, or we have at least good reason to believe, that Asia and Africa have much to learn from Europe. The British Empire is the largest and most successful of schools.

And to the world at large the empire brings advantages. Especially it opens the prospect of one immeasurable boon. If the growth of great empires disturbs for a time the general tranquillity, their existence, once established, is the surest guarantee of a lasting general

bodies of old men, women and children, half-burnt, lay in all directions; here and there might be seen a few solitary individuals, sitting with their heads buried in their hands, hardly noticing the passing caravan, and apparently in the lowest depths of misery and despair. On questioning several of these unhappy beings, I was informed that the Masai had unexpectedly arrived one morning at dawn, spearing and burning all before them, and carrying off 250 women, and large herds of cattle. Only a few of the unfortunate people had escaped by flying to the mountains.'

And so again with the Somals, and the Suks, and others."

Had England achieved nothing else in her history than to have stopped, through a third of Africa, the colossal devastations, and the smaller but more frequent massacres, which have saturated the soil of that continent with more blood than was ever spilt in Europe in the darkest ages of which we have record, she would surely be entitled by that alone to a high place among the servants of mankind.

peace. When Europe was divided into hundreds of petty principalities it was the scene of constant turmoil, from which the formation of large centralized states could alone rescue it. In the same way, many of those who look forward to a distant future in which the harmony, perhaps the federation, of nations will inaugurate a permanent reign of peace, see in the gradual substitution of a few world-empires for an infinite number of independent and mutually hostile polities, a step towards this ultimate goal. Not many things are more evil than a frontier, and the fewer frontiers there are to divide the human family the more possible its eventual unity becomes. The argument must not, of course, be pushed too far; it should not lead men to ignore genuine sentiments of nationality or be used to justify the conquest of progressive, liberty-loving peoples; but the fact remains that the present control of one-half of the land-area of the earth by four powers, England, Russia, the United States and France,¹ renders an ideal of ultimate unity less utopian; and, viewed in this light, the maintenance of the British Empire may be counted a service to the true interests of mankind.

Moreover, if we leave the future and look to the present alone, there are many observers who see in the existence of the British Empire one important advantage to the nations beyond its boundaries. It constitutes a great moral force on the side of progress; and we have a right to believe that if the territories now

¹ Estimated Land Area of the Earth: 52,821,000 square miles.

					Area: square miles.
British Empire	.	.	.	.	11,288,000
Russia	.	.	.	.	8,660,000
U.S.A.	.	.	.	.	3,508,000
France	.	.	.	.	204,000
French Possessions	.	.	.	.	4,367,000
					28,027,000

(*Statesman's Year Book*, 1901. From the figures of the British Empire the area of the Soudan is apparently omitted.)

controlled by Anglo-Saxons were in other hands, in the hands, let us say, of some Mahommedan power, or even in the hands of Russia, not those territories alone would be the poorer, but the Frenchman, the German, the Italian, the Japanese, would have lost a vast external influence for good, which, however imperceptibly and slowly, is now contributing to mould the character of their governments and peoples in ways that make for progress.

And in more obvious and material affairs, British expansion has helped other nations in their economic conditions by opening valuable markets to which their trade may extend on equal terms with our own.

A summary of the advantages of empire must include, lastly, its influence for good on the character of the British nation itself. A country's great achievements cannot fail to dignify, in some degree, each one of its citizens. No one will dispute that every Englishman, no matter what his personal merits may be, is the better for sharing in those inheritances which are bound up with the idea of England. To be one of a people which has taught mankind the principles of constitutional government, which has been the pioneer in industrial progress, which has developed one of the greatest of literatures and has given birth to many of the leaders in science, scholarship and philosophy, is surely a privilege that ennobles. So too the success, in the main, of the empire which England has created helps to raise the national type. The average Englishman, believing that the empire is on balance a force for good, feels a pride in his membership of it, a pride more legitimate and exalted than could ever have been felt by a Roman citizen in the far less beneficent and far less extensive empire in the possession of which he had a share. Vaguely or definitely, as the case may be, he knows the story of English achievements in the distant parts of the world. He knows that the great free communities of the United States, Canada and Australasia are the

creation of his race. He believes that in India and Africa the empire, in spite of its blemishes, is a pacifying and civilizing force, helpful to the progress of mankind. Himself, perhaps, a quiet, stay-at-home artizan or shop-keeper, by virtue of his nationality he is linked to the exploits of his fellow-countrymen in the field, to their heroism as pioneers, to their efficiency as explorers, as law-givers and as colonists.  The empire enlarges his interests and outlook, gives him a fuller confidence in the future of his nation, strengthens in him the qualities of foresight, persistency, self-sacrifice and restraint, that are needed to preserve and develop so vast a dominion ; it adds to his country a new prestige and to his citizenship a new grandeur. Valuable as are the material advantages in trade and in defensive power which the empire brings to the British nation, it is this ennoblement of the race which must be counted its richest gift. ✓

Now just as the disadvantages of empire, viewed by themselves alone, led to the formation of a school which took a Little England as its ideal, so these numerous advantages of empire, viewed by themselves alone, may be seen to have given birth to another school which sets no limit to imperial expansion. The difficulties of governing an area already so vast, clearly shown by the grievances under which the native races still suffer, are ignored. The risks of conflicts with other powers, the growth in the burden of armaments, the tendency to neglect home affairs, are treated as of no account. The rapid growth of our dominions, and their superiority in extent and prosperity to the colonial possessions of other powers, have so intoxicated this part of the nation that they have lost all sense of proportion and all regard for means and ends. To "colour the map red" they hold to be desirable for its own sake ; almost any annexation, no matter what sacrifices it might cost, they would support ; and we find the view sometimes expressed in Parliament, often in the press, and yet more often in private discussions, that a statesman who refuses

to seize every opportunity for adding to the empire fresh territories, whether they be valuable or not, whether they be already peaceful and progressive or not, whether or no other powers have prior rights of occupation, must be disloyal to the imperial idea and tainted by the doctrines of the "Little England" creed.

CHAPTER IV

LIBERALISM AND THE EMPIRE

IN the presence, then, of these facts and opinions what attitude may the Liberal party be said to take?

No accusation is more false than that Liberalism is identified with ideas of uncompromising opposition to empire. No accusation can be more clearly disproved than this is disproved by both the declarations and the actions of Liberal leaders in successive generations. The empire is indeed largely the creation of the statesmen of this school. It was Cromwell who enlarged its diminutive beginnings. The Whigs of the Revolution continued his work. Chatham built up the main body of the edifice. By the grant of self-government to the colonies, Melbourne and Russell made the structure secure; and if mere extensions of territory were to be taken as the tests of imperial faith, Liberal administrations have the credit, or the responsibility, of one-half of the annexations of recent times.¹ That section

¹ "In my eyes it would be a sad spectacle—it would be a spectacle for gods and men to weep at—to see this brilliant Empire, the guiding star of freedom, broken up—to behold Nova Scotia, the Cape of Good Hope, Jamaica and New Zealand try each its little spasm of independence." (Earl Russell (Lord John Russell), *Recollections and Suggestions*.)

"What is called the Manchester School has never ruled the foreign policy of this country—never during a Conservative Government, and never especially during a Liberal Government." (Mr. Gladstone, Speech at Edinburgh, March 17, 1880.) "I believe that we are all united—indeed, it would be most unnatural if we were not—in a fond attachment, perhaps in something of a proud attachment, to the great country to which we belong—to this great Empire, which has committed to it a trust and a function given from Providence as special and as remarkable as ever was entrusted to any portion of the family of man. Gentlemen, when I

of the party which would defend the empire with reluctance and regard disintegration without dismay is, notoriously, even more insignificant in numbers and influence to-day than at any previous period; and only a blind prejudice could assert, and ignorance believe, that the wild declarations of a few extremists prove the Liberal party to be careless of imperial interests. It is equally certain that the tendency of Liberalism is hostile to the opposite "Jingo" school, and resists a policy of continual aggression and unlimited expansion as both immoral and inexpedient. //

We can see that the conviction is deeply rooted among the vast majority of the Liberal party, as it is deeply rooted in almost every organization of Englishmen, that the empire is on the whole a beneficent force, that the good in it far outweighs the evil, and that its future development is destined to be yet more helpful to the progress of mankind. We find a devotion to its service, a determination to develop its resources, to cherish its unity, to defend, if necessary by the sword, the integrity of its dominions. But we find the Liberal party always urging also that the empire is a trust as well as a pride,

speak of that trust and that function I feel that words fail me : I cannot tell you what I think of the nobleness of the inheritance that has descended upon us, of the sacredness of the duty of maintaining it. I will not condescend to make it a part of controversial politics. It is a part of my being, of my flesh and blood, of my heart and soul. For those ends I have laboured through my youth and manhood till my hairs are grey. In that faith and practice I have lived; in that faith and practice I will die." (Mr. Gladstone, in the same speech.) //

The comparison of selected passages is not always of value, but it is interesting to contrast these declarations with the view held by some of the earlier leaders of the Conservative party. The Duke of Wellington, when Prime Minister, refused the request of a deputation that came to urge on him the addition of New Zealand to the then comparatively small empire, saying that "England already had colonies enough." (See W. P. Reeves, *The Long White Cloud*, p. 157.) And Disraeli wrote in 1852 to Lord Malmesbury, the Foreign Secretary: "These wretched colonies will all be independent in a few years, and are a millstone round our necks." (Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 260.)

The following are the annexations under Liberal and under

that the welfare of its native subjects has claims at least as binding as the interests of its British rulers. And their attitude is one of restraint, since they say that to widen its bounds too far and without careful regard to the expediency of each step, would be to weaken its central strength, to lessen by diffusion the efficiency of its government, and to invite by aggression the just hostility of neighbouring powers. Some men are led by the virtues of the empire and by reaction against "Little England" doctrines to ignore the right limits of Imperialism; some are led by the faults of the empire and by reaction against "Jingo" doctrines to underestimate the importance of maintaining and developing

Conservative Ministries respectively, since the creation of the Reformed Parliament—

LIBERAL MINISTRIES.	CONSERVATIVE MINISTRIES.
Aden 1839	Scinde 1843
New Zealand 1839	Natal 1843
Hong Kong 1841	Pegu (Lower Burmah) . . 1852
Labuan 1846	Central Provinces of India
British Kaffraria 1847	(Coalition Ministry) . . 1853
Central Provinces of India	Basutoland 1868
(Coalition Ministry) . . 1853	Fiji 1874
Oudh 1856	Socotra 1876
Perim 1857	Cyprus 1878
Lagos 1861	Upper Burmah 1886
Griqualand West 1871	British East Africa . . . 1886
Perak and other Malay	Zululand 1887
States 1874	Sarawak and Brunei . . . 1888
British North Borneo . . 1881	Pahang (Malaya) 1888
(Egypt occupied) 1882	Rhodesia 1889
Additional Malay States 1883	Zanzibar 1890
British New Guinea . . . 1884	British Central Africa . . 1891
Niger Coast Protectorate 1884	Ashantee 1896
Niger Territories 1884	Wei-hai-wei 1898
Pondoland 1884	Kow-lung 1898
Somaliland 1884	Soudan 1898
Bechuanaland 1884-5	Transvaal and Orange
Tongaland 1894	River Colonies 1900
Uganda 1894	

It should not be forgotten that from 1886 to 1902 Conservative Ministries have been in office for thirteen years, and a Liberal Ministry for only three.

our dominion. The main body of Liberals claim to hold the middle position.

But is a faith in the empire and a devotion to its service consistent after all with the leading principles of Liberalism? We are sometimes told that the very existence of an empire such as England's, despotically ruling its scores of subject races and tainted by all the evils that have been enumerated, is in itself an absolute negation of Liberal ideas. Let a man be an Imperialist of even the mildest type; he may usurp the name of Liberal, but he cannot, so they say, be a Liberal in fact.

How can conquest, for example, be reconciled with Liberalism? A military force is sent by the British Crown to some part of Asia or Africa; it disperses the native armies, dethrones the native chiefs, and returns, having established in authority an alien administrator and garrison in place of the independent government that has been destroyed. Can Liberals, whose love for liberty and belief in democracy should be leading doctrines of their creed, support, or even acquiesce in, actions such as this?

Independence, however valuable to a people, is not their highest good. Liberals hold that the ultimate purpose of politics is nothing narrower than to help men to advance towards the best type. No people can reach the goal, indeed, unless they have liberty; but there may be stages in the march when unrestrained liberty is rather a hindrance to them than a help. A barbarian race may prosper best if for a period, even for a long period, it surrenders the right of self-government in exchange for the teachings of civilization. Because we think freedom better than control, we do not count it a kindness to let a child do whatever he likes, or a sick man eat whatever he fancies; and because we hold that democracy is good for the Englishman and the Frenchman, we need not pedantically pretend that it must always be good for the Indian or the African as well. England is justified in assuming the government of backward races if there is sound reason to believe that her subjects will gain more from the excellence of her rule than they will lose by

the sacrifice of their independence.] This might be offered as in itself a sufficient answer. But it must also be borne in mind that in very many cases annexation to the empire has not involved, as a matter of fact, the sacrifice of independence at all. It has been nothing more than the exchange of one domination for another. In India, for example, national governments, in the true sense of the term, were rare exceptions even before the time of the Company; the Emperor of Delhi was himself a Mongolian, and in most parts of the peninsula the English rulers were hardly more foreign to the original native population than the Mahrattas or the alien Mohammedans who preceded them in the sovereignty. In many districts of British Africa, again, tribal independence had equally disappeared; the aborigines were under the cruel yoke of alien conquerors, of the Baggaras in the Soudan, of the Zulus, Matabele and Kosas in the South, of the Fulahs and other Mohammedan invaders in the West; they found in the British Empire rather a liberating than a subjugating force. And it must be remembered that British imperial policy has always held among its chief principles the duty of maintaining and developing all self-governing institutions that are consistent with good administration. Many hundreds of native chiefs are upheld in authority in India, the Malaya and various parts of Africa; natives are admitted to official posts in most of the settled dependencies; representative councils have been set up in the towns of India, in Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Uganda and elsewhere; the franchise enjoyed by Europeans is shared by many of the Indians of Canada, the blacks of Cape Colony, the Maoris of New Zealand, and the negroes of Jamaica; and a movement that aims at training the subject peoples in the art of self-government is continually proceeding. The art is not easy. The pupils are not always apt. The task is often surrounded by formidable obstacles. India with her differences of race, her hundred and fifty languages, her smouldering fires of religious hatred, Africa with the low mental development of a large part of her population, are unfavourable fields for free institutions. Yet

however slow and tentative the process must be, and however small the ground that has yet been covered, the fact remains that England is honestly seeking to teach her native subjects to be self-dependent, and in place of the barbaric licence of which they are deprived, to give them in the fulness of time, and under the ægis of her own flag, a new and a better freedom. And it must be remembered, lastly, that for England to refuse to interfere with such independence as may have existed, would not mean that these peoples would be free from interference. The alternatives before them were not independence on the one hand, annexation to the British Empire on the other ; the alternatives were either annexation to the empire of England or else annexation to the empires of France, of Germany, of Russia or of Belgium. Rightly or wrongly, English Ministries of both parties have been at various times averse to further expansions. Especially in the years preceding 1884 they had refused many opportunities.¹ But in that year the sudden development of German activity in the Pacific and in Africa, and the forward policy of France in Tonquin, Tunis, on the Upper Niger and in Madagascar, compelled a change of policy. It became clear that the conditions of the world no longer allowed isolation, and that the day was past when uncivilized peoples could remain undisturbed in their barbarism or work out unaided their own salvation.² It is difficult for a nation

¹ In the cases, for example, of Zanzibar, the Cameroons, Damara-land, Namaqualand, the Fulah country, the Ivory Coast, part of the Congo region, part of New Guinea, New Caledonia.

² GROWTH OF EMPIRES OF CONTINENTAL POWERS.

	1884. Square miles.	1898. Square miles.	Actual addition.	Area of 1898 compared with area of 1884.
France. .	869,000	3,630,327	2,761,327	4½ times
Germany .	208,670	1,030,030	821,360	4½ times
Belgium .	11,370	900,000	888,630	79 times

The figures for 1884 are from *The Times*; those for 1898 are extracted from the *Statesman's Year Book*.

to be a fair judge in its own cause, but Englishmen seem entitled to claim, on the strength of the past records of European expansion, that if a savage or semi-civilized people is to be governed by some Western power, it is on the whole to the interest of that people, if a choice be open, that the governing power should be England. To abstain on conscientious grounds from meddling with native sovereignties, only to see those sovereignties overthrown by nations less mild in rule and less helpful in civilization than ourselves, would surely be the most shortsighted and futile of philanthropies.

These, then, are the considerations that reconcile Liberals to the idea of dominion.

But what of the more material injury done to the natives—their ill-treatment by colonists, their degradation by drink, their exploitation by financiers? How can such evils as these be ignored or condoned by Liberals?

Liberals neither ignore nor condone them. They are never tired of repeating that the interests of the subject races must be a supreme care; that if England assumes control over thickly-populated territories only in order to exploit them, like an absentee landlord, for her own profit; if she sends her troops to conquer nations in order to keep them, as Mill says one people may keep another, "as a warren or preserve for its own use, a place to make money in, a human cattle farm to be worked for the profit of its own inhabitants";¹ if she denies them her attention and sympathy and neglects their well-being—her annexations are thefts, her rule is a tyranny, her empire is not a glory but a source of unending shame. Did the native peoples suffer on balance from the existence of the empire, nothing could justify its annexations. But surely this aspect of British rule is not its predominant aspect. We do not judge the civilization of Europe by its criminal courts and its prisons. The existence of crime is a fact to be taken

¹ J. S. Mill, *Representative Government*, p. 326.

into account, but it is only one of a thousand facts. The occasional abuse of power in the dependencies must not indeed be ignored, but neither must it be viewed out of its true proportion. Estimate at their worst every grievance from which the natives suffer, add them together at their highest total, still they are surely far outweighed by the benefits the empire brings; and he can be no true friend of the natives who, on the ground of these defects, would wish India restored to the anarchy, and British Africa to the barbarism, from which by the help of England they are now slowly emerging. Nor are the defects incurable. They are indeed gradually being cured. We must judge the empire not merely by what it is, but by what it is in process of becoming. Every student of the history of British colonization knows that the cases of ill-treatment of natives are far rarer now than they were a century ago; and as public opinion at home is always growing more sensitive and alert, making its influence felt in the furthest outposts of the empire, and helping to replace the contemptuous neglect of native rights by a spirit more consistent with the declared objects of British policy, there is reason to hope that in times to come these evils will be rarer still. The drink question is often, and very justly, quoted as a crying instance of injury done through British expansion. But the drink question has already been effectively dealt with in many dependencies; the sale of European spirits to natives is prohibited by law in Natal, Basutoland, Rhodesia, Kimberley, British Central Africa, Northern Nigeria, the Soudan, Fiji, as well as in most of the Australian colonies; and there need be no doubt that measures which have been so often adopted with success will be imitated in other places where they are necessary. The extinction of native races is a question of the past rather than of the present; but where there are tribes still threatened by this fate, as in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, no effort is spared to preserve their existence by the allotment of separate reservations and by all other practicable means. The land and labour laws, affecting natives, are admitted to be excellent in most of

the dependencies; it cannot be long before these precedents are followed in the territories where they are still at fault. And if any legislative reforms are possible to improve the condition of the ryot population of India, to relieve their heavy taxation, and to strike at the economic causes of famine, we cannot question that the Indian Government will adopt them. For whatever evils be suffered under British rule, experience has shown that there is inherent in that rule the will and the capacity to cure. Amputation, here, is not the only remedy. Since this is so, and since already the natives derive so large a balance of good from the existence of the empire, Liberals, who are asked on grounds of humanity to condemn our annexations in the backward regions of the world, answer that it is precisely on grounds of humanity that they approve them. Not the pride of dominion, nor yet the mere wish for new fields of trade, lead Liberals to defend the integrity of the empire; but the same cosmopolitan and humanitarian spirit that impelled Wilberforce and Clarkson to their crusade against slavery, animated Gladstone in his campaign against Turkish atrocities, and has inspired the devoted labours of missionaries in all parts of the world, now commands a strenuous support for the work of British administration; its faults are temporary, its services are permanent, and history gives no record of an agency more effective for combating oppression and for spreading enlightenment. Liberalism cannot be, as some would have it, progressive in all things but this, conservative and inactive only where barbarism is in question.

The political dependence of the white colonies, although a real drawback, is now seldom quoted in support of Little England views, for it is generally recognized that the grievance would be met by the adoption of some form of Imperial Federation whenever the governments of the colonies so desired. That any large body of Englishmen should be allowed no voice in framing a policy by which they are affected is admitted on all hands to be contrary to the spirit of the constitution,

and no one disputes the desirability of raising the colonists from the status of subjects to that of citizens of the empire. Perhaps the time is not so close at hand as some have thought, when a member for Capetown and a member for Melbourne would be heard in the debates of a new House of Commons at Westminster, and the representatives of Jamaica and Singapore would sit side by side with the members for Paddington or Oxford. Probably a less ambitious scheme must content us.¹ It may be that preference will be given to a proposal which is favoured by many of those who have paid close attention to the subject: the formation of a new advisory body, an Imperial Council, consisting of some four or five members of the British Cabinet, with an equally small number of representatives chosen by the greater colonies, whose function it should be to consult with the Foreign Secretary in dealing with questions that touch the outlying parts of the empire, with the Colonial Secretary in considering Colonial Bills affecting general interests, and with the War Office and the Admiralty in concerting measures for the common defence.² But whether by these means or by others, we cannot doubt

¹ The chief difficulties that face this form of Federation are—

That the addition of colonial members to the present House of Commons would give the colonies a voice in the domestic affairs of the United Kingdom, and an influence in party contests, which the British electorate would justly resent; that if a new assembly were created to deal with imperial affairs alone, its functions would be few unless it was allowed powers of taxation, and the Colonial Parliaments would probably be unwilling to allow it such powers; that distance would prevent adequate communication, and that the differing circumstances of the various parts of the empire would prevent common action, except in a few matters that could be almost as well treated without a Federal Parliament.

It is generally agreed that if the change be attempted before colonial opinion in its favour has fully ripened, the unity of the empire would be weakened rather than strengthened. The imperial taxation, which would really be essential, would be regarded as tribute; a difference of opinion on a particular policy might lead to open disruption; and closer contact might only mean greater friction.

² This was the proposal of the Imperial Federation League, and

that steps will be taken to remove the well-founded objection of colonists to the management of their affairs by authorities over whom they have no direct control.

What, however, is to be said of the constant growth of armaments, and of the friction with other powers, which the empire's expansion has brought in its train? Since Liberalism has always been the friend of financial economy and international peace, and since the empire causes increased expenditure and international unrest, how can Liberals be supporters of empire?

This unrest might be due to one of two causes. It might come from the resistance of other powers to England's aggressions, or it might come from the envy of other powers at England's colonial success. But for a long time past our policy has scrupulously avoided attack on the legitimate interests of the other great States. On the contrary it has been serviceable to them in the several ways that have been indicated. So long as England's attitude remains pacific, the ill-will that is shown can rest on no ground that is morally valid. We do not say that a merchant should abstain from enterprise in his business because enterprise would bring success, and success might make his neighbours envious and unfriendly. A nation also has the right to do the work in the world for which its character fits it. If England's achievements make others hostile through jealousy or covetousness alone, only a very nerveless sentimentality would turn her from a course that is advantageous to herself, her subjects and the world at

it has received much support outside the members of that now defunct body.

The practicability of giving to the new colonial representatives, or to the present Agents-General, the right also to speak, but not to vote, in the House of Commons, has not yet received the consideration it seems to deserve. It would be a reversion, with a difference, to an eighteenth-century practice. It was then usual for colonies to pay a salary to private Members of Parliament, who should act on their behalf whenever matters affecting their interests were before the House of Commons. The position of Burke as agent for New York Province is well known. The practice had many advantages.

large. Few would deny that the country is entitled to continue along the path it has chosen, while waiting for the time when, the period of expansion being over and the nations having grown accustomed to this enlarged dominion, its existence will be no more a cause of unrest than is now the existence of the United States.

The growth of armaments is an unqualified evil and a most serious drawback. Possibly means can be found, consistent with national interests, for stopping the increase or even for lightening the burden. The point will be discussed later.¹ But as it stands, the added expenditure on armaments, though a heavy price, cannot be counted an excessive price for the vast and growing benefits which the empire brings. The addition to trade must be put to the opposite account; the dignity given to the nation by its imperial position is a valuable asset on the credit side; and it would be a far heavier burden than is now imposed that would lead the English people to abandon a field acquired by the energy, cultivated by the labour, and consecrated by the blood of so many of their race, which is the source of much of their present prosperity, and which is yearly bringing larger advantages in wealth, in defensive resources and in a legitimate national satisfaction, as the population of the empire grows, its trade expands, and the well-being of its subjects increases.

Finally there is the tendency to neglect home reforms. Must not Liberals regard this as a serious evil?

No doubt. But is this tendency to be counted an inevitable result of empire? Are not the reformers themselves in no small degree to blame for it? A new spirit has risen in the nation, a fuller consciousness of its imperial station, a firmer determination to maintain that station and fulfil its duties. But many of those who are the most eager for progress at home have notoriously failed to keep in touch with this powerful sentiment. Criticizing the faults without praising the virtues of the empire, dwelling on the sacrifices it

¹ See pp. 374-5, 378-9.

demands without emphasizing the advantages it brings, they have allowed an impression to grow that those who are most trustworthy in home politics will be indifferent or hostile when wider affairs are in question. The impression may be a wrong one. The fact remains. The opinion has taken root among a large part of the electorate that the policy of social and constitutional reform, and the policy of imperial defence and imperial unity, are alternatives, that they will not both be supported by the same men; and believing that a choice has to be made between them, these electors have preferred to see reforms at home postponed than to risk, as they supposed they risked, the mismanagement of crucial issues abroad. Must not the reaction of recent years, and the long neglect of domestic questions, be attributed to this as their chief cause? But in that case, what should be the attitude of Liberals desiring progress? To rail at the empire, to denounce its claims, to neglect its interests for the sake of constitutional and social reform, can only have the effect of perpetuating power in the hands of men to whom constitutional reform is an object of detestation and social reform no more than an election cry. To pay attention to internal affairs alone is to court exclusion from office and to lose the management of all affairs; indifference to one half of politics means impotence in both; and Liberals must needs be sympathetic to imperial interests, not only because the empire is itself a force for progress and in harmony with Liberalism, but also for the very reason that the only way to prevent the eclipse of domestic by imperial questions is to convince the nation that the activity of a Liberal Government at home will not involve carelessness abroad. Hostility to the empire is an injury to domestic progress.

So far in answer to the protests of the Little England school. But the Liberal position has to meet attacks from the opposite side as well.

The extreme Imperialists denounce it as illogical and weak. If the empire is so beneficent, why not extend it at every opportunity, and if it is well for England to

control a fifth of the world, why should she not aim at controlling a half? You have faith in the empire and devotion for its service; does not your plea for "restraint" come merely from a want of energy and nerve?

To enlarge the empire's area without limit would, it is answered, both increase the disadvantages of empire and lessen its benefits.

Suppose that this policy, which we can see has already captured many imaginations, were to gain altogether the upper hand. Suppose that England were to adopt in all parts of the world a course of political intrigue and military violence in order to add, by hook or by crook, to the number of her possessions. A first result would inevitably be a further great increase of armaments; the tax-payer would feel the weight; the growth of trade might not be enough recoupment; and an Imperialism which caused impoverishment would be an exchange of the substance for the shadow of greatness. Further, as England's governing energies were diffused over a more largely extended area, the government would itself become less efficient. Twenty new territories, covering 3,700,000 square miles and containing fifty-seven millions of population, have already been added to the empire during seventeen years, from 1884 to 1900 inclusive; in that short time its area has been increased by no less than 46 per cent.;¹ many of the new territories have hardly been touched as yet by British administration, and some are hardly even known to more than a handful of explorers. Those who hold that an active and careful government of the dependencies can alone justify their acquisition will not welcome further additions before these have been fully digested. And, more important still, conditions have changed since the empire took its rise and made its recent advances; very little of the world is now undivided among powerful and more or less progressive Governments; it is one thing to occupy vacant land, it is another to move your neighbour's landmark; and if England were to adopt now-a-days a policy of indiscriminate expansion, she would be increasing an

¹ See note, opposite page.

international friction that is already dangerous and probably precipitate conflicts that already threaten. By invading the legitimate interests of other powers, she would invite a succession of great wars in which defeat would be disastrous and victory exhausting, while in

1 ADDITIONS TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE 1884-1900.

		Area : Sq. miles.	Population.
British New Guinea	1884	90,540	350,000
Nigeria	1884	? 450,000	? 30,000,000
Pondoland	1884	4,040	188,000
Somaliland	1884	68,000	(unestimated)
Bechuanaland	1884-5	264,000	272,000
Upper Burmah	1886	83,470	2,947,000
British East Africa	1886	860,000	2,500,000
Zululand (including Tonga- land)	1887	15,000	240,000
Sarawak and Brunei	1888	65,000	545,000
Pahang (Straits Settlements).	1888	10,000	57,000
Rhodesia	1889	470,000	718,000
			(N.W. Rhodesia pop. unestimated)
Zanzibar	1890	1,020	200,000
British Central Africa	1891	42,217	900,000
Uganda	1894	150,000	4,000,000
Ashantee	1896	21,000	? 3,000,000
Wei-hai-wei	1898	270	118,000
Kow-lung	1898	400	100,000
Soudan	1898	950,000	? 10,000,000
Transvaal and Orange River Colonies	1900	167,000	1,301,000
		3,711,957	57,436,000

Total area of the British Empire, January 1884...sq. miles 8,059,179
 Total population " " " " 248,000,000

(The figures are extracted from the *Statesman's Year Book* of 1885 and 1901, with the exception of those for Zululand and Rhodesia, which have been taken from Mr. C. P. Lucas's *Historical Geography of the British Colonies*; for Uganda from the Report of H.M. Special Commissioner to Uganda 1901; and for Ashantee from Longman's *Gazetteer*.)

either event her own honour would be tarnished by so wanton a disturbance of the peace of mankind.

Nor is this all. Empires are not immortal. The sovereignties of Babylonia, Assyria and Persia, of Macedon and Rome, of Charlemagne and of the Saracens, of Napoleon and of Spain, each in turn decayed and was dissolved. The electorate which has now in its charge the destinies of England's empire must consider not only the means of increasing but the means of preserving its dominion. The two are not always compatible. To add new territories may weaken our grasp of the old. Expansion that is too rapid and too wide may open the door to all three of the causes which, singly or in combination, have brought the downfall of the empires that have preceded—attack from without, revolt from within, disunion and weakness at the centre. Is it an empty fear that the policy urged upon us of constant annexations would so fan the feelings of enmity in our powerful European neighbours that, growing past restraint, they would result at last in a combined attack? Is it not possible, if our energies were scattered too broadly and if the excellence of our government were consequently diminished, that the native races might feel they lost more than they gained by their subjection, and, more conscious than now of the strength which their numbers give them, might start a conflagration of revolt beyond our power to control? And is it not certain that if further extensions were made at the cost of attacking our neighbours and neglecting our subjects, the mother country would be divided against herself; that the best elements of the nation would refuse to make sacrifices for such a dominion; that men of conscience would be bound to wish for the failure of the enterprises of their own Government; that patriotism itself would be undermined, and that, with the disunion of the governing people, would come the most fatal of the forces of disruption? Benjamin Franklin, in one of the darkest times of our history, offered to furnish Gibbon with materials for a new work, on the "Decline and Fall of the British Empire." Four generations have passed since then, and

events have not given room for a book on that subject. But if in a later day some historian is called upon to take up this melancholy task, it may well be that he would have to write down an excess of ambition as the chief cause of decay, and to point out that the most fatal danger which had faced the British Empire had been an over-fervent Imperialism among the British people.

The Liberal party is active in its opposition to constant and indiscriminate expansion. But it does not seek to veto on that account any and every expansion. It would clearly, indeed, be absurd to say that the boundaries which have been reached in this year of grace, largely the result of accident as they are, must be considered the extreme boundaries for all time. Our resources may grow; the conditions of the world may change; occasions may offer when civilizing influences can be extended, and the national commerce enlarged, without danger and without strain. To hold that on no conditions whatever should annexations be allowed, may be to fall into the same error that led the Privy Council in the time of Elizabeth and James I. to prohibit all further building in London, for the reason that a city of two hundred thousand inhabitants was already monstrous, and that a still greater city would be utterly unmanageable. Each particular case must be judged on its own merits in the light of the general principles which have been declared.

Is the Liberal party, then, an Imperialist party? It must depend on the meaning you give to the word.

If by Imperialism is meant a policy of unlimited expansion, of contempt for the rights of other powers, of neglect for home reforms, of carelessness for native interests, inspired by a lust for dominion for the sake only of the glory and the wealth it brings, then undoubtedly Liberals are no Imperialists.

But if the word is held to signify a loyal determination to defend the empire we hold, a sentiment of close unity with the English colonists, a desire to promote the interests of the empire without injury to domestic progress, to develop its commerce while scrupulously

caring for the well-being of the subject races, to maintain its sovereignty while preparing the way for an extension of native liberties ; if our Imperialism includes no wish to attack the rights of our neighbours, no eagerness for further expansion save when the advantages very clearly outweigh the drawbacks, and no callousness of bloodshed ; if it is inspired by an enthusiasm not indiscriminating and a pride not deaf to criticism or blind to the needs of reform—then we may say, without danger of denial, that the Liberal party as a whole is essentially Imperialist. ✓

The controversy is one of words. The greatest questions that divide mankind are often based, said Robespierre, on misunderstanding. There has been no misunderstanding in our recent politics more persistent or more unfortunate than that attaching to the meaning of this term. The conclusion of the matter will be found by those who recognize that there is a true Imperialism and a false, a useful Imperialism and a hurtful, each with its zealous partisans, and that Liberalism supports the one as strenuously as it attacks the other.

NOTE.

If it be true that the Liberal party is in the main agreed on these principles, how, it may be asked, did it come about that there was so profound a division within its ranks on the merits of the South African war ?

We would venture to suggest that the division was not on questions of principle but on questions of fact. It was not a cleavage between Imperialists and anti-Imperialists, but between "Pro-Boers" and "Anti-Boers." Was the British Government a party to the Jameson Raid or not ? Were the grievances of the Outlanders real or unreal ? If real, was President Kruger prepared to grant genuine measures of reform ? Did the methods of British diplomacy justify the Boer leaders in thinking that an attack on them was intended from the beginning ? Did the Transvaal collect its armaments with a view to driving the English out of South Africa, and converting it by force of

arms into a great Dutch Republic? Was it, in fine, a war for England of defence or of aggression, on behalf of free institutions or in opposition to free institutions? According to the answers men gave to these specific questions their judgment was naturally formed. No doubt the extreme "Jingo" would approve any war that promised annexation, practically regardless of the circumstances of its origin. And no doubt the extreme "Little Englander" would disapprove any war that would lead to annexation, no matter how that war originated. But a party which belonged to neither of these schools would almost inevitably be divided in conscientious opinion; for the points of fact were complicated and uncertain; men, united on the spirit and main principles of imperial policy, might well differ honestly on the questions at issue in this particular case; and one need not have been a friend of aggression to approve the war, nor a disbeliever in empire in order to think it unjust. The sections of the party were at variance, not on rules of policy, but on the true reading of the facts to which those rules were on this occasion to be applied.

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN POLICY

IN home politics and in imperial politics every action of government may take its place as part of a settled scheme, but the conditions of foreign policy are always shifting. England during the nineteenth century, for example, found it necessary at one time to wage war with France, at another time to be in alliance with France; she co-operated with Germany and opposed the aims of Germany; she fought against Turkey and on behalf of Turkey; against Russia and side by side with Russia; she invaded the United States and entered into close friendship with the United States; she both upheld the interests, and bombarded the towns, of Japan; both fought for Portuguese independence and threatened the Portuguese capital; fought for Greek independence and threatened the capital of Greece. One might as well take pains to describe the position of one piece of glass in a kaleidoscope among the rest, as to attempt a discussion in detail of the relations, present and future, between our own country and its various neighbours.

Nor would it be suitable in any statement of Liberal principles and proposals to treat such questions as those that now present themselves in the Far East or the Near East, in Egypt or in Newfoundland, or to discuss the various advantages of policies of alliance and isolation, of intervention and non-intervention, or the degree to which England should sacrifice her separate aims in order to maintain the Concert of Europe. These are too largely matters of detail, they depend too much on the special conditions of each individual case, for a

general theory to be attempted with success. And it cannot be said that on these subjects there is any policy which is distinctively Liberal.

There are, however, modes of approaching problems of foreign policy which are permanent, and certain broad principles that can be applied to every case as it occurs.

Two doctrines compete for the general guidance of international affairs ; and a statesman, a party, or a nation must accept the teaching of one or the other of two schools of thought if their course through the currents and shallows of foreign politics is to be intelligent and consistent.

Of these fundamental theories, the ideal of one is cosmopolitan ; of the other it is strictly national. One holds that a State has duties to all mankind ; the other that a State's duties are limited to its own subjects. One is inspired in its dealings with foreign nations by a spirit of good-will ; the other by a spirit of active or latent hostility. One is the theory of a Fox, a Russell or a Gladstone ; the other of a Metternich or a Bismarck.

Now the first of these springs from the root of Liberal policy. Devotion to it, hostility to the other, has been among the essential principles of Liberalism throughout its history. At various times and in various circumstances Liberals may hold different views as to the desirability of intervening in this part of the world or that, of co-operating with this power or the other ; but the doctrine that the foreign policy of England should aim at promoting the welfare, not only of England, but of the world at large is a permanent and characteristic article of their creed.

They must needs hold this view, indeed, if they are consistent with themselves, since the foundation of Liberalism is the moral law that the State has the duty of advancing the welfare both of its own members and of all whom it can influence. Moreover, as we shall see later, this view alone is truly patriotic, and a Government will only succeed in serving the interests

of its subjects if it shows a generous consideration for the interests of those who are not its subjects.

The doctrine can be applied in practice in one of three ways, depending on the condition of the people with which we have to deal.

If they are savage or semi-civilized, our State may itself undertake their government and help their progress by the gift of good laws and good administration. In this way England is now helping the progress of many of the races of Asia and Africa. If they are a civilized people but living under a foreign rule distasteful to them, the State may assist by moral, or even material support their efforts to win liberty; as England gave moral support to the republics of Central and Southern America and to Italy, and material support to Greece, Montenegro and Crete. But if they are both civilized and free, our State can only help them, first, by a domestic policy that will raise our own intellectual and industrial standard—for a prosperous and intelligent England cannot fail to increase by trade the wealth, and to improve by example the institutions, of other nations; secondly, by a foreign policy that is friendly and unaggressive, leaving them in complete security, and free from all danger of interference, to work out their own destiny in their own way.

This does not of course involve any neglect of our own defence or any apathy in forwarding our own legitimate interests. Clearly, if attacks were threatened by Russia on India or by France on our colonies, or if attempts were made by others to annex territories where we have larger interests and prior rights, no plea of international duty would prevent England from meeting them by firm resistance or by counter-attack. And in the competition for trade a Government must necessarily consider first the claims of its own subjects; for its duty to them is primary. No Liberal statesman has ever put forward the obvious absurdity that the spirit of England's policy should be so cosmopolitan that the needs of the English themselves should be forgotten. But the point which they have always urged

is that, while fully preparing ourselves against the risk of attack, we should not be constantly assuming that attack is threatened ; though ready for defence, we should treat our neighbours, whenever they will allow us, rather as actual friends than as probable enemies ; competing for commerce as actively as we can, the competition, like that between private traders, should be carried on without enmity ; we should abstain, not merely from actual aggressions, but from threats, from contemptuous references, from boastfulness about our own position, from every word or deed likely to cause international bitterness and increase international friction.

All this seems so obvious that it might appear superfluous to state it, were it not that the directly opposite view is held by a very large section of the nation.

Converse with any average Englishman on questions of foreign policy and you will find, as often as not, that he is altogether innocent of any idea that one country has obligations to the rest. He will admit, of course, that a man has duties to his neighbours, that a State has duties to its colonies and dependencies ; but when the national frontiers are passed, the sphere of duty, in his opinion, is left behind. He goes on the assumption that foreigners are alien creatures, whose interests need never be considered unless there is reason to fear their strength, or some definite occasion for desiring their help. In his eyes the world is a battle-field in which a number of units, called nations, are struggling for precedence and territory and power ; this struggle is the natural order of things ; it is the business of his own country to shoulder the others aside if it can ; and the task of our statesmen is nothing else than to overreach and outwit, by diplomacy or by veiled force, the statesmen of other nations. If it is suggested that the world should be regarded, not as a cockpit, but as the abode of a single human family, all the members of which are striving side by side to increase their common welfare ; if it is suggested that mankind is divided into nations not for purposes of mutual opposition and conflict,

but simply for convenience of government and for the sake of variety of development; if it is urged that the business of statesmen is not primarily to secure the predominance and glory of this power or that, but to increase the little stock of happiness that our poor humanity enjoys,—he treats the idea first with surprise and then with indignation, scouts it as absurdly utopian and then denounces it as dangerously unpatriotic. It is this spirit, and by no means the spirit of good-will, which permeates a large part of the electorate; we find it constantly expounded in the press; it spreads to the Parliament, it influences the Ministry, and largely determines the practical action which our country takes in its dealings with others. To substitute for it a higher doctrine of foreign policy is among the chief tasks that Liberalism sets out to perform.

Try to discover why our average Englishman should hold these views, and you will usually find that his mind is led to them by three main ideas. In the first place he will probably be to some extent influenced by the old ignorant prejudice against foreigners as such, a dislike, not necessarily of individual Frenchmen, Germans and the rest, but of their types; of characteristics which he knows to be different from the British characteristics and believes to be inferior. In the second place you will undoubtedly find that he is impressed by the traditions of his country's glory; conscious that from the remotest past, generation after generation of Englishmen have been building up, in sea-fights and on the battle-field, a great record of national fame; he is filled by the thought that the Englishmen of to-day have to maintain the high standard set by their forefathers; so far from desiring the friendship of others, he would not be sorry to see his country at war in order that his generation also might have an opportunity of adding to the annals of British renown. Lastly you will detect a feeling of irritation at the fact that other nations are actively competing with his own in trade; it is the commercial struggle which is responsible for much of his bitterness, and he looks on foreign States with an unfriendly eye

because he views them chiefly in the light of dangerous rivals in trade. All this is in addition to the desire to add fresh territories to the empire and the resentment caused by the colonial enterprises of other powers; a matter on which enough has been said in the previous pages.

The first of these influences—insular prejudice—is clearly unreasoning, and cannot therefore be met by reason. On a par with the attitude of the savage Sioux, “who would share his last mouthful with a starving Sioux but take the scalp of a starving Apache,” it is gradually being destroyed by the fuller knowledge of other peoples which education, travel and international intercourse are bringing to all ranks of the nation; it is yielding before the general advance of civilization and the growing sense of the unity of mankind.

The second—the thirst for national glory—is based on a notion of patriotism which appears to Liberals to be profoundly false.

When wars are waged for defence or in promotion of some great cause, no one would dispute that success in them is wholly honourable. The glories of Blenheim and Waterloo, of Leipzig and Gettysburg, are real glories, beyond the challenge of moral criticism, and England, Germany, the Northern States of America, take higher rank through the achievement of such victories. But successes, on the other hand, gained in conflicts that are avoidable, in wars that are invited, while they may prove the vigour and efficiency of a nation, add nothing to its real greatness; battles won in an unjust war no more ennoble the victor than the success of a criminal in his crimes; the conquests of an Attila, a Tamerlane or an Emperor Napoleon, rightly viewed, reflect not glory but deepest shame on the peoples that produced and supported those wanton disturbers of the peace; fame, like happiness, comes only when it is not sought; and a moment's thought should be enough to show that a nation which makes wars for the sake of winning victories will only succeed in lowering its position in the estimation of the world.

We are not accustomed to admire the type of the seventeenth-century swashbuckler, who would go swaggering down the street, "taking the wall," elbowing passers-by into the mud, only too pleased if their remonstrances gave him an excuse for a challenge and a display of his skill with the rapier. Our Jingoës would have us believe that the prestige of England would be raised by playing such a part. They seem to think cynical selfishness a mark of greatness, and to ignore foreign susceptibilities a proof of superiority. But the prestige of England, said Lord John Russell, "cannot be separated from the character, the reputation and the honour of England." "In undermining," said Mr. Gladstone, "the basis of the esteem and respect of other people for your country, you are in reality inflicting the severest injury upon it." A weak surrender of rights will not enhance the national reputation, but neither will an attitude of truculent hostility; and Liberals hold that a patriotism which is opposed to the well-being of the world brings no glory to the nation and is therefore not patriotism at all.

There remains the question of trade competition.

So long as the competition is fair, carried on according to the well-recognized rules, its only weapon the cheapness, excellence and active advertisement of the goods supplied, it can surely give no valid reason for animosity. A shopkeeper is not thought justified in showing personal hatred towards a rival and in yearning for an opportunity to burn down his shop, because that rival had gained ground on him by a better management of his business. If England is being ousted from certain markets by the enterprise of German and American traders, the fact is the strongest of reasons for improving our own industrial methods at home and pushing our commercial interests abroad; it is surely no reason, as some seem to think it, for showing to Germany or the United States a hostile front. The Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs lately summed up the matter when he declared that "it is now an almost indisputable thesis that a regular economic struggle is quite compatible

with close political relations." It is compatible also with feelings of cordial good-will between the peoples engaged. There may be competition without conflict and emulation without enmity.

Those who take an opposite view forget that the countries which are our keenest competitors are at the same time our largest customers. They forget that England carries on with the United States, Germany and France a business amounting to some three hundred millions a year, or more than a third of her foreign trade. They forget that this branch of our foreign commerce is increasing at the present time more rapidly than any other. And they forget that these countries are among the most profitable fields for the investment of our surplus capital. In the long run, the greater their economic prosperity, the greater is also our own.

And the intellectual, as well as the material, advance of every portion of the world helps the civilization of every other. Science and philosophy are cosmopolitan; religious movements take little account of frontiers; the greatest literature speaks with the language, indeed, of one nation, but it speaks to the ears of all. There is no machine in our workshops, no book in our libraries and no ornament in our houses but is the better for American inventiveness, for German research and thought, and for the art of France; and a desire to cripple the progress of nations from whom we have learnt, and are learning, so much, is a desire to stop a current that is bringing many of our most valued gifts.

Finally, bitterness on the one side cannot fail to breed bitterness in return. A spirit of contempt and aggression inevitably brings reprisals. "He who makes many afraid of him has himself many to fear." It is no advantage to England that the state of the world—

"When the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels," should endure for ever. The love of domineering is a boomerang policy that comes back to strike ourselves in the form of increased armaments, heavier taxation and national insecurity; and an additional reason of self-

interest for an attitude of good-will is that such an attitude is the best guarantee of our own tranquillity.

This, then, is the nature, and the justification, of the foreign policy which Liberals may be seen to favour. Moral duty, a patriotic care for the reputation of our country, a wish for the prosperity of our customers in trade and our colleagues in the work of civilization, a desire for our own security and peace, all combine to command a policy of good-will.

Once let the nation be permeated with a proper spirit in these matters and there are few questions of practical foreign politics which will not find a satisfactory solution. The actual lines of their settlement must necessarily be left mainly to the leaders of opinion and to the ministers in office. The questions to be dealt with are usually complex and their treatment requires detailed knowledge. It is more important for those who are in touch with the rank and file of the people to strike the right note, to teach the nation the right frame of mind in which to approach all foreign problems, no matter what they may be ; teaching them to take as their ideal not a dominant England but a harmonious world, to recognize that "the greatest nation is but a fragment" and subject like any individual to moral laws ; that small nations have equal rights with large ; that while national interests must be defended, international interests are also important, and that devotion to the cause of peace is itself an element in patriotism.

CHAPTER VI

PEACE

AMONG the strange survivals of primitive customs in the life of modern society, the continuance of war as a recognized institution of the commonwealth of nations is surely the most strange. That each State should maintain a vast body of men, kept from productive employment, drilled, armed with the deadliest weapons of destruction that science and ingenuity can invent, in order that, if some disagreement between governments occurs, the matter may be settled by a process of slaughter ending in the exhaustion of the forces of one party or the other, is a fact that casts a slur on the name of civilization and a doubt on the reality of human progress.

If warfare continues it is largely because, even in an age of enlightenment, wars are popular. The fighting is welcomed for its own sake. There is still surviving much of the old barbaric delight "in the merry days of battle." Any war, unless it be flagrantly unjust or the campaign unsuccessful, is sure to evoke intense enthusiasm, and any government which engages in military operations is more likely to be admired than condemned.

The cheering crowds, in a time of war, lining the streets while the troops, bands playing, colours flying, march through on their way to embark; the hot excitement of the packed audiences in the music-halls, shouting the choruses of patriotic songs; the eager reading of the newspapers, with their vivid messages from special correspondents at the front, watching every battle, every

skirmish, almost every shot and thrust ; then the dense multitudes again in the streets wildly cheering the returning generals and army—all this is not merely the zeal of a nation sternly determined to uphold its rights abroad ; it is not merely the expression of a people's gratitude to those who are ready to risk everything in their country's service. If we are candid we are bound to confess that this spirit is not so different from that which led all Rome on a feast-day to flock to the Colosseum and sit crowding to see the gladiatorial shows ; it is the thrilling joy of watching a game in which men's lives are at stake.

And while war evokes these elemental passions among the masses of the people, the leaders of public opinion in the press, on the platform, and even in the pulpit, are often found justifying war by elaborate and plausible sophisms. It is a moral discipline. It calls out some of the best qualities in man—courage, endurance, complete self-sacrifice. It lifts a nation's thoughts from the desk and the workshop to a theatre in which the old heroic qualities may have full play, and rescues a people from the slough of materialism. It is nature's method for securing among nations the survival of the fittest. So there is offered a kind of intellectual defence for wars ; and while it is admitted that they are injurious if too frequent or too prolonged, we are asked to believe that they have their place in a proper ordering of the world's affairs, that an era of unbroken peace, apart from its possibility, is not even to be desired by thoughtful men. And then there is the feeling of helplessness in the presence of long-established custom, which leads those, whose minds are of the passive type, to believe that efforts at change will be useless. "There always have been wars, and always will be, and nothing you can say or do will stop them." Only dreamers of millenniums will belong to Peace Societies. Men of common-sense will recognize the hopelessness of checking a practice which has survived through all the ages of human history.

What is this thing which is welcomed by a large body

of the nation, regarded as the finest of games, defended by philosophers as useful, and which we are asked to accept as an inevitable fact in the normal life of civilized communities?

"Let your readers fancy," wrote *The Times'* correspondent after the battle of Sedan, "masses of coloured rags glued together with blood and brains, and pinned into strange shapes by fragments of bones. Let them conceive men's bodies without heads; legs without bodies; heaps of human entrails attached to red and blue cloth; disembowelled corpses in uniform; bodies lying about in all attitudes; and skulls shattered, faces blown off, hips smashed, bones, flesh and gay clothing pounded together as if brayed in a mortar, extending for miles, not very thick in any one place, but recurring perpetually for weary hours; and then they cannot, with the most vivid imagination, come up to the sickening reality of that butchery."

Or let the reader suppose himself travelling a journey of five hundred miles, say from Portsmouth to Edinburgh or from Paris to Milan, and let him suppose that he sees from the windows of the railway-carriage a row of dead men lying shoulder to shoulder all the way on each side of the line; he would be passing in one grim review the two and a half millions of soldiers who have been killed in the wars of "civilized" powers during the last fifty years alone.¹ Burnt farms; the starving populations of besieged cities; epidemics of disease; the artilleryman, taking careful aim, sending a missile full of explosive to burst in the middle of a group of soldiers; one man, dressed in uniform, thrusting a bayonet into the throat or abdomen of another—these are the central facts of war; and all the endurance on the march, the bravery in rescuing the wounded, the stubborn stand against attack, the strategy of generals, the bands and the uniforms, the pomp and panoply of an army, are

¹ The quotation from *The Times* is extracted from Mr. J. M. Robertson's *Patriotism and Empire*. The figures of lives lost in recent wars are taken from a calculation published by the Peace Society.

merely the concomitants, merely a cloak which seeks to cover, but cannot hide, the slaughter and the devastation which are the essence of war.

Sometimes, indeed, all this must be undertaken. For the sake of a great cause or in self-defence, these evils must be faced. But it is in the spirit of the surgeon, who unflinchingly uses the knife to remove or prevent some deadly disease, that they must be faced; and no argument that warfare is sometimes necessary, that there are greater evils than warfare, will justify the writings that would render attractive, the doctrines that would glorify, the custom of war. There is a tribe in India which worships Mata, the goddess of small-pox; the Celts of ancient Spain raised temples and sang hymns of praise to Death; those who would surround war with an attractive glamour, and who dwell on its supposed advantages to the national character, are of no different creed.

Granted that the battle-field gives room for the display of noble qualities, and that it is the page on which many a tale of the purest heroism has been written, the fact remains that war is a horrible outlet for the virtues. We do not wreck our ships in order that the lifeboat crews may show their courage. We do not burn our houses in order that the firemen may display their bravery. To acquiesce in war for the sake of the qualities it evokes is not less preposterous. To lead men to face death in order to watch their fortitude in fronting it, is a course that might appeal to the Hindoo fakir who thought it heroic to gash his flesh with knives, and was ready to throw himself to be crushed under the wheels of Juggernaut's car; it is hardly a course that seems likely to commend itself to men of a higher religion, and to the members of a more developed civilization.

"War is needed to relieve the meanness and monotony of modern life." But modern life need be neither monotonous nor mean. In the acquirement of knowledge, in social service, in sharing in the great movements of domestic politics, in sharing in the government of an

empire that covers a fifth of the globe, in communion with great thinkers, in the religious transformation of our time, we may find interests, not unworthy, that may save us from a narrow materialism, without need of setting armies to fight to furnish a brief excitement.

As for the evolutionary argument, the doctrine that wars are the form among nations of the struggle for existence, through which nature suppresses the weak and enables the fittest to survive, that to stop it would be to eliminate one of the most powerful forces that make for advancement—it is enough to say that facts disprove it. History may furnish some instances, indeed, of a fitter race substituting by conquest its people or its ideas for those of a race less fit; but among modern contests between civilized peoples the cases are rare where such has been the result. In the last half-century there have been wars between England and Russia, between Prussia and Denmark, between Prussia and Austria, Germany and France, Russia and Turkey, Servia and Bulgaria, Chili and Peru, Japan and China, England and the South African Republics. Except in the last case, the outcome of each has been no more than some slight readjustment of territory or of influence. There has been no displacement of one race by another. In eight cases out of the nine it is hard to see how the evolution of mankind has been at all advanced.

Suppose that this theory were established as a definite principle in European politics. Its absurdity would at once be obvious. Any nation that chose to consider itself the best, because it was the best armed, would be justified in attacking its neighbours, seizing their territory and destroying the populations. The outcries of the civilized world would be met by the plea that this was the natural method of human evolution. Because the one nation was able to conquer the others, it thereby proved itself to be the fittest, and its unprovoked aggressions and ruthless slaughter could be defended as being in the long run the highest service to humanity. It would be a strange kind of evolution that would throw the world back to the conditions of the Dark Ages.

"But wars are inevitable." It is the attitude of hopelessness which would make improvement hopeless, and those who say that wars are inevitable are the people who render them so. Were the idea recognized to be hateful, the thing itself, among civilized nations, would cease. Already the partial acceptance of the ideal of general peace has led to a partial cessation of wars. During the eighteenth century, Europe was at peace for only fifteen years; in eighty-five years it was disturbed by wars. During the nineteenth century, on the other hand, Europe had peace for sixty years, and was disturbed by war for forty. The history of England records sixty-three years of peace and sixty-three of war (against peoples of European race) between 1689 and 1815. Between 1815 and 1900, there were eighty-one years of peace and only four of war. In the former period she was at war for one year in every two; in the latter period for one year in every twenty. These facts are enough of themselves to show that much may be done to hold in check the combative passions of peoples.

No custom was thought so ineradicable among Englishmen, and indeed so necessary, as the duel; to attempt to abolish it was held a hopeless task; yet the duel has wholly disappeared. The precedent is encouraging; and it may be that, in Carlyle's words, "as men no longer wear swords in the streets, so neither by and by will nations."

Liberals will not be deterred, either by sophistical arguments, by a fatalistic pessimism, or by the real difficulty of the task, from their efforts to spread among the people a sentiment adverse to war. Admitting that wars may, very rarely, be necessary, they yet seek to extirpate that pernicious temper which is ready to resort to arms on any trivial occasion, which speaks light-heartedly of war, and would rather encourage than suppress the bellicose instincts of the people. They, in England, co-operate with kindred parties throughout the world which are simultaneously trying to inspire their several nations with a feeling of mutual respect and a

love of peace. And as a practical substitute for armed force in the settlement of the great majority of disputes that may occur, Liberals, with few exceptions, advocate the method of arbitration.

Not long ago it was the fashion to ridicule international arbitration as visionary. Because it could not be applied in matters affecting the independence of nations and the integrity of their dominions, it was assumed to be useless. Because it was urged the most actively by idealists who dreamt of complete disarmament and an immediate reign of unbroken peace, arbitration was thought to be tainted with the utopianism of its friends. But in spite of ridicule it has won its way into the field of practical politics. Ever since the time when Mr. Gladstone, although faced by the bitterest opposition, by a powerful current of British animosity against the United States, and met by violent accusations of want of patriotism, risked his popularity and weakened his government by consenting to refer to arbitration the American claims arising out of the Alabama dispute—avoiding by so doing a war which we can now see would not only have been unnecessary, but would have been disastrous to the best interests of the Anglo-Saxon race—ever since the days of the Washington Treaty, arbitration has been established as, in very many cases, a valuable second line of defence against war when diplomacy has failed. In the seven years, 1893 to 1900, no fewer than forty-eight international disputes have been settled by this method. In the same short period there have been signed a large number of commercial and other treaties which have included clauses providing for arbitration in the event of disagreement on the execution or interpretation of those treaties.¹

“It is hardly too much to say,” the late Lord Chief Justice of England declared, “that arbitration may fitly be applied to the case of far the largest number of

¹ See *The Progress of International Arbitration*: a Paper read at the Conference of the International Law Association at Rouen, August 21, 1900, by W. Evans Darby, LL.D. (Published by the Peace Society, New Broad Street, London, E.C.)

questions which lead to international difficulties. Broadly stated, wherever the right in dispute will be determined by the ascertainment of the true facts of the case; where, the facts being ascertained, the right depends on the application of the proper principles of international law to the given facts; and where the dispute is one which may properly be adjusted on a give-and-take principle with due provision for equitable compensation, as in cases of delimitation of territory and the like; in all such cases the matter is one which ought to be arbitrated, and can be satisfactorily dealt with by arbitration.”¹ The recent creation of an International Tribunal at the Hague has greatly facilitated the adoption of arbitration. It has done more. The wider commonwealth that shall include the whole civilized world is a goal unattainable, indeed, to our generation. Yet it is none the less real to the best minds and none the less worthy of seeking. The establishment of an International Court, ready to act as a judge between nations, has opened for us a window through which we may catch a distant glimpse of the age when the history of the human race will no longer be stained with blood on every page, and when peoples will decide their disputes without recourse to the barbarous method of mutual slaughter.

¹ Address by Lord Russell of Killowen to the Law Congress held at Saratoga Springs, U.S.A., on August 20, 1896.

CHAPTER VII

DEFENCE

BUT a peaceful policy on the part of our own country may lessen, it can never completely remove, the risk of war. England may scrupulously abstain from aggression, she may be free from the passion for military glory, she may be ready to arbitrate on all questions that can rightly be put to arbitration; the fact can be no guarantee that other countries will do the same. There can be no certainty that the vicissitudes of French politics will never place in power another Louis XIV. or another Napoleon; that the secular movement of Russia towards India will never be resumed; that the colonial and trading aspirations of Germany will never lead her to aim at forcibly enlarging her empire at the expense of British interests; and a party which, in its aspirations towards international good-will and a permanent peace, forgot to provide against eventualities such as these, would be clearly unworthy to control the destinies of the nation.

It must be confessed, however, that there are some Liberals who seem inclined to neglect this side of politics. Their hatred of war and abhorrence of militarism lead them to take little interest in questions of navy and army administration. Their wise dislike of exaggerated armaments makes them often assume that whatever armaments we happen to possess are sure to be sufficient. Seeing that many of those who are loudest in pressing for expenditure on the army and navy are men who hardly conceal their wish for aggrandisement abroad,

they are inclined to think that expenditure on the army and navy can only be advocated for purposes of aggrandisement. And recognizing that the strength of a nation depends more on the character, intelligence and wealth of the people than on the vastness of its preparations for war, they are sometimes disposed to treat preparations for war as a matter of small importance. But the main body of the Liberal party has never consented to these conclusions.

It is one thing to desire and to work for the brotherhood of nations ; it is another to act as though that brotherhood were already established. We do not wish to be a military and conquering nation ; the fact is no reason why we should lay ourselves open to the risk of being defeated in a war of defence. We may believe that social progress has the first claim, that the empire will not be strong if its heart be diseased, that "brains are more than bayonets," and that the health, intelligence and prosperity of the people are a surer guarantee of independence than the vastness of fleets and armies ; we need not therefore believe that fleets and armies are of little account. That the works of a watch are more important than the case is no reason for leaving the works uncased. And in the present condition of the world, the view that a just and peaceful policy on our part will be enough to guarantee us from attack by others, is too optimistic ; the histories of Holland, Poland, Prussia, Switzerland and Denmark have shown more than once that the maxim "He's armed without that's innocent within," is more excellent as poetry than reliable as a policy. "England," as Mr. Meredith says, "cannot invest her all in the millennium and be ruined if it delays to come." The motto "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform" does not cover the whole sphere of politics. Security is needed as well ; and a policy is clearly incomplete which fails to give prominence to the need of maintaining an armed force powerful enough to defend the national rights if attacked, and to secure the fulfilment of the national duties if opposed.

That this view, and not the other, is authoritative in the Liberal party is shown, not only by the votes of Liberal members in the House of Commons and by the declarations of Liberal politicians in the country, but also by the actions of Liberal statesmen when in office. The largest measure in recent times for the reorganization and strengthening of the army is associated with the name of Mr. Cardwell; the policy of systematic shipbuilding for the navy, with the name of Mr. Childers; and one of the most important groups of additions to the fleet, with the name of Lord Spencer, the head of the Admiralty in the last Liberal Government.

Ability to hold command of the sea in the event of war is a necessity of the national existence. If that command were taken from us the result could hardly fail to be fatal. The British Empire has a sea frontier of many thousands of miles; it would lie open to attack at almost any point. Our land forces are comparatively small in numbers; a continental power could land an army of millions in whatever part of our possessions it chose to select. Reinforcements sent from home have to cross the sea; they could not be sent without the gravest risk of capture. Our over-sea trade would be at the mercy of single cruisers; with its destruction the whole industrial system at home would be thrown into disorder; factories would be closed and workshops laid idle, and unemployed workmen would be numbered by hundreds of thousands. Worst of all would be the famine that would inevitably follow the stoppage of the food-supplies that come from abroad. Our country produces no more corn than will feed a fifth of the population. Thirty-three millions of people depend for their bread on sea-borne trade. Suddenly to supply their wants by a larger production at home would be physically impossible; England, once surrounded by hostile cruisers, would be as completely in the power of her enemies as Paris surrounded by the German army, and sheer want of food would compel the one, as it compelled the other, to consent to peace no matter how humiliating the terms. In presence

of such a prospect it is no wonder that Mr. Cobden, the most consistent of all friends of peace and the most determined of all opponents of militarism, declared, in a well-known speech, that he would vote an expenditure of a hundred millions on the navy rather than see it lose its position of superiority.¹ The maintenance of a dominant navy must be regarded by Liberals, as it is regarded by their opponents, as a first principle of national policy.

Since the command of the sea is vital to England for purposes of defence, and since her army is small in numbers compared to others, foreign States cannot fairly regard the preponderance of our navy as a threat against themselves, or consider the national resolve to maintain that preponderance to be due to unfriendly designs. The Liberal party shows no inconsistency when, on the one hand, it advocates the principles of peace and good-will, and on the other it co-operates in providing a fleet strong enough to protect, in any eventualities that may occur, our coasts, our commerce and our colonies.

The duties for which, in the British Empire, land forces are needed naturally fall under six heads—

“(1) Garrisons for naval bases.

(2) A garrison for Great Britain against invasion by *coup de main*.

(3) A garrison for India with a reinforcement ready when required.

(4) Imperial police.

(5) Counter-attack on an enemy's territory after the command of the sea has been won.

(6) Resistance *en masse* against invasion in the extreme case of naval disaster.”²

Every one of these duties, including capacity for counter-attack, may at any moment need to be performed, not in obedience to any policy of expansion and aggression,

¹ Speech at Rochdale, June 26, 1861.

² Sir Charles Dilke and Spenser Wilkinson, *Imperial Defence*, p. 138.

but solely in order to win success in a war strictly of defence.

To maintain armaments on sea and land sufficient for these purposes must be accepted, therefore, as a necessity. But clearly it is a most unhappy necessity. The cost is colossal, and is continually increasing. In 1891, as we pointed out in an earlier chapter, England was spending less than thirty-two millions a year on her army and navy. In 1901 she was spending, apart from war charges, sixty-one millions a year. The expenditure on armaments is an open vein in the modern State, slowly dissipating a large part of its strength and resources. Economically speaking, it is sheer waste; as unprofitable to the nation as if we spent, through our taxes, sixty-one millions a year in the manufacture of fireworks and in maintaining a body of three hundred thousand men¹ with the sole duty of letting them off.

Further, every increase in the forces of one nation naturally leads to a similar increase in the forces of its neighbours. Germany creates a navy; England must increase hers. The larger British fleet is regarded by Russia as a danger to her interests in the Far East, and by France as a danger to her interests in the Mediterranean. France and Russia are therefore compelled to add to their navies, and this addition is felt by England to be a menace to her command of the seas; she again must build and man additional ships, throwing into insignificance the new German navy, which must in turn be increased. So Europe goes on indefinitely with her game of beggar-my-neighbour, till we are threatened with a condition of things when the whole surplus funds of the various peoples shall be devoted to purposes of defensive armaments. And at the end each would be in much the same position relatively to the rest as it was at the beginning.

At this moment the six great powers of Europe are spending on their forces over two hundred millions a year, and are keeping in unproductive idleness three millions of

¹ In the army establishment paid for by the British taxpayer there are 195,000 men; in the navy 114,000.

soldiers.¹ Statistics are dry things. But when we translate these figures into terms of human life, when we think of the Sicilian peasant doing the work of a slave in the sulphur-mines to earn the taxes he must pay to the Government, of the Russian mujik toiling to increase, not his own comfort, but the military budget of Russia, of the English labourer in his old age unable to get relief for his poverty, or the young workman unable to secure the better education he needs, because the money is required for another army corps or a new naval programme—we realize the true meaning of these statistics of expenditure.

✓ Larger funds devoted to military objects mean smaller funds devoted to social reform. ✓ Additions to armaments on our part lead to similar additions on the part of others. The conclusion is that the nation, while maintaining its forces at such a point as will give security, has every reason to abstain from going beyond that point.

But, at the present time, the establishment of a vast army

¹	Expenditure on Army and Navy.	Numbers of Army on Peace-footing.	Numbers of Army on War-footing.
Austria-Hungary	£14,200,000	362,000	1,872,000
✗ France	40,900,000	598,000	2,500,000
Germany	30,800,000	576,000	3,000,000
Italy	15,300,000	268,000	3,272,000
Russia	45,000,000	1,100,000	4,600,000
United Kingdom	61,000,000	195,000	720,000
Total	£207,200,000	3,099,000	15,964,000

The figures for the foreign States are extracted from the *Statesman's Year Book* for 1901. Those for the United Kingdom are taken from the Budget estimates for 1901-2, and from Mr. Brodric's statement on army reorganization. The numbers of British troops do not include the men serving in India; the peace strength includes only Regulars, and the war strength does not take into account a large proportion of the Volunteers.

recruited by conscription is in some quarters actively urged. In a torrent of articles, pamphlets and volumes, compulsory military service is persistently advocated.¹ We are told that it is impossible to raise the army we need by voluntary recruiting. And we are to be persuaded that there is a physical, a moral, and even an economic advantage in giving to the whole of our youth a military training. To this doctrine the Liberal party as a whole has been strenuously opposed.

The case against conscription may be simply stated.

Two plans are proposed. There is the system of the ballot—the arbitrary selection by lot of a certain number of men who shall be forced to serve in the army. And there is the system of universal compulsory service.

To the first plan there are obvious and fatal objections. The gross inequality of this method, the flagrant injustice of the manner of selection—"a combination of the press-gang and the roulette-table"—is enough to condemn it, and by far the greater number of the writers who favour compulsory service, advocate a universal, and not a partial and arbitrary, conscription.²

∟The first objection to universal service is its extreme costliness. ✓ There can be no greater mistake than to suppose that the system would lessen the cost of the army to the tax-payer. The only item in the estimates that would be reduced would be the pay and pensions of the privates and the non-commissioned officers. But the pay and pensions of these ranks form only a small proportion of the total expenditure. It is difficult to extract from the various divisions of the War Office accounts what this proportion is. At the highest, taking the most generous view of the figures, it is less than one-third, or

¹ See the monthly Reviews in 1900 and 1901; the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* and the *United Services Magazine* for some years past; and pamphlets such as Lieut.-Col. Underwood's *A Plea for Conscription in Britain*. This literature is ably summarized in Mr. G. F. Shee's *The Briton's First Duty: the Case for Conscription*.

² "If you introduce the question of the ballot, it cannot remain at the ballot; it must be conscription." (Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords, February 20, 1900.)

ten millions out of the total vote of thirty millions. The other two-thirds are the pay of the officers, the cost of provisions, forage, clothing, warlike and other stores, horses, works, buildings, transport, the medical service, and the War Office establishment. None of these charges would be lessened by conscription. On the contrary, since the size of the army would be largely increased, all these charges, except the last, would be increased in exact proportion. If all the adult males of the country were to serve with the colours for only one year each, we should have a standing army at least three times as large as the present. If the men received no pay at all, there would be a reduction in the estimates of ten millions at the most. But the other expenses of the force would be trebled, involving an increase of fully forty millions. Deducting the ten millions under the head of pay there would be left a net addition of thirty millions. And this makes no allowance for the expenses of the annual training of the vast multitudes of men who had passed into the reserve.

Even this is not all. A force nearly as large as the present British regular army would be needed for foreign service, and to be in readiness for foreign service; in addition to this, conscription would keep four hundred thousand men under arms;¹ the indirect loss to the nation through withdrawing this large body of men from industrial labour would be equivalent to a further loss of many millions a year.

Compulsory service, secondly, would inevitably lower the fighting efficiency of our troops. If the British soldier holds a first place among the soldiery of the world, it is because he adopts the profession from love of it; each individual in the ranks is there because he has the fighting spirit in him. Make men soldiers by Act of Parliament, and you may give them the uniform, the name, the habits of the soldier, but you do not give them the spirit. "One volunteer is worth three pressed men," is a saying which sums up a long and exhaustive

¹ *The Briton's First Duty*, p. 178. Lieut.-Col. Underwood's pamphlet, p. 24.

experience, and by forcing into the fighting line men whose natural aptitude is for the arts of peace, we should be adding to the numbers of the troops at the cost of lessening their general effectiveness.

Nor is liberty a thing of small importance. The essence of conscription is the forcing of men into an occupation which they would not adopt of their own free will. The youth of the nation would be forbidden to lead their lives as they wish, to find out for themselves the best lines of conduct, to form their own ideas and to choose their own training. "It is a strange desire which men have," said Bacon, "to seek power and to lose liberty," and it is a strange policy to make the English citizen the slave of the drill-sergeant in order that he may be the despot of a still wider extended empire. And conscription involves a close police supervision of the whole population if evasion is to be prevented. Every young man has to be registered, watched, traced in his movements from place to place, punished if he fails to present himself, permanently exiled if he is absent abroad at the age of service, imprisoned if he ventures to return. The system would be rightly detested by a people whose tenacity of freedom is proved on every page of their history.

Army discipline, again, teaches above all, and must necessarily teach above all, a blind submission to authority. It tends to destroy the sturdy independence which is the life-blood of a democratic state. It instils a passive obedience to authority whether competent or not.¹ It must needs teach that fearless, healthy criticism is in the nature of a crime. Military discipline kills the power of independent initiative; and any employer of labour will testify that the reason why it is so difficult for old soldiers to find industrial employment is the fact

¹ "Glorify the military virtues as he may, there is probably no one who will venture to dispute the proposition that, for the man in the ranks at least, barrack life and military discipline must of necessity have a somewhat levelling and repressive tendency." (The Gold Medal Prize Essay on *The Relative Advantages of Voluntary and Compulsory Service*, by Captain Ellison. *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, April 1897, p. 420.)

that they have been so accustomed to have their every action decided for them by others, and their every movement fixed by regulations, that the power of independent action is atrophied. The training may no doubt have certain counterbalancing advantages for that large part of the men now serving with the colours who are drawn from the less settled and more unruly classes of the community, and to whom the constraint of army life may be of benefit. But if the whole population were passed through the mill, the training could hardly fail to be injurious to character. We cannot contemplate without dismay a state of things in which the British nation, whose strength lies above all in its strong, confident self-reliance, shall be disciplined into silence and drilled into subservience. Nor is it any advantage that the whole people should be made closely familiar with military ideas. To the soldier the killing of men must become a constantly present and not abhorrent notion; at any moment he may be called upon to do the work. Universal service cannot fail to do much to destroy that respect for the sanctity of human life, to have established which in the modern world is one of the noblest results of the triumph of Christianity.

Further, there is to be taken into account the effect of army service on sexual morality. To remove large bodies of young men from home surroundings, to isolate them, at the age when character is in the mould and habits are plastic, from the purifying influence of the women of their family, to collect them together in garrison towns, will inevitably have injurious effects on the national character in a matter of the first importance.

There are political consequences also to be considered. If the young men of the nation are trained to military habits, the electorate cannot fail in time to be filled by the military spirit. The idea with which the soldier must be mainly inspired is a cheerful willingness to fight the subjects of any or every foreign State. The idea with which the citizen should be largely inspired is a cordial friendliness for the subjects of foreign States. By making every citizen a soldier, combativeness is en-

couraged and friendliness decreased. Nor, probably, is it true to say, as many suggest, that if the whole people were liable to suffer from the penalties of war, the nation would be less ready to embark on war; that conscription would be in fact a guarantee of peace. No feeling is more deeply implanted in the human mind than that of sensitiveness to the accusation of cowardice; and in the event of any crisis in foreign politics, the voters would be few in a conscript country who would venture to make a stand against the war spirit that is always evoked at such times, for fear of being told that they wished for peace because they were themselves afraid of fighting.

If it be said that town life is injuring the physique of the nation and that a year of military drill is necessary as a corrective, the answer is simple. Granted the inferiority in build and strength of a large part of the population, it is surely a better policy to remove the cause than to attempt a doubtful cure. The fact that slums breed unhealthiness is not a reason for establishing military service, but for abolishing slums. That large numbers of boys get no opportunity for playing out-door games is not a reason for afterwards devoting a year of their lives to the drill-yard, but for increasing the number of play-grounds. Better housing, better feeding, more gymnasiums in the schools, more open spaces in the towns, and more leisure for working-men, so that they may indulge the love of athletics natural to Englishmen, appears to be a policy of physical regeneration cheaper than conscription, free from its moral and political disadvantages, and more likely to be effective in the end. ✓

Must all these evils of conscription, nevertheless, be faced? Is it true that by rejecting it we are risking the empire? Is it the fact that the enlargement of the British dominions makes it no longer safe to maintain our small voluntary forces in the face of the vast armies of the continent?

The British Islands have no frontier but the sea. Australia and New Zealand have no frontier but the sea. The frontier of India, except in the north-west corner

and in the extreme east, is formed partly by the sea and partly by impassable ranges of mountains. Canada's only neighbour on land is the United States, and the United States have no large army ; a conflict with them is happily a very distant risk, but if it occurred we could improvise a considerable force as rapidly as they. None of our other Asiatic, African, or American possessions, nor India on the east, could be reached by a European army unless it crossed the sea. The danger of another war with the Boers is to be removed by their absorption within the empire and their disarmament. The population of Abyssinia is small, and its forces, though formidable, not such as to cause alarm. If the command of the ocean be secure, and if England has an army sufficient to hold the strongly-fortified north-west frontier of India, our forces have no functions to perform except to garrison naval bases, to operate against savage or semi-civilized tribes, and, in the event of war with a European power, to furnish expeditions for the attack of outlying territories and to defend our coasts against raiding parties who might possibly elude the vigilance of our fleet. And the empire possesses at this moment, trained to arms and enlisted in the various services, over one million men.¹

So large a force is surely enough for any contingency short of a campaign of conquest on the continent of Europe or of America ; and such a campaign it is neither necessary nor desirable that England should be able to undertake.

The conscriptionists would have us believe that these establishments cannot be maintained at their present figure on account of the difficulty of finding recruits. In the first place, it may be answered, it has by no means been proved that so large an army is essential, and that the empire could not be well defended with a smaller land force. The defects of our military system seem to lie less in inadequacy of numbers than in faults in the organization and direction of the men we have ; and better training for the officers, lower expenses of

¹ See note, opposite page.

living so as to make it easy for men who have zeal and ability, but no means of their own, to hold commissions, better shooting in the soldiers, more initiative on the part of individuals, greater perfection in the equipment of the forces, appear to be more necessary than the

¹ ARMED FORCES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1901.

	Number of men of all ranks
Regular Forces at Home and in the Colonies	234,963
Army Reserve, first class	24,128
Militia	110,743
Yeomanry	10,114
Volunteers	230,785
Regular Forces on the Indian Establishment	66,581
Total (effectives by latest returns)	677,314
Indian Native Army	140,640
Volunteers in India	29,371
Indian Imperial Service Troops	17,664
Canadian Militia (Active)	36,650
Forces of the Australian Colonies	29,014
Forces of New Zealand	9,835
	263,174
Navy	114,880
Naval Reserve	28,000
	142,880
	1,083,368

The figures are taken from the *Statesman's Year Book*, 1901, pp. 58, 60, 144-6, 244, 328, 341.

This total does not include those volunteers who have been serving in South Africa without previously belonging to any of these forces; nor the 18,000 volunteers in Australia trained to the use of the rifle, but not drilled (Coghlan, *The Seven Colonies of Australasia*, 1899-1900, p. 310); nor does it include the additional men to be enlisted under the Brodrick scheme; nor the 349,000 men belonging to the armies of the feudatory States in India, although many of these were offered for service in South Africa; nor the large number of small local forces maintained in Cape Colony and Natal (under normal circumstances), in West Africa, the Soudan, Ceylon, Straits Settlements, and many of our other Asiatic and African possessions.

maintenance of great hordes of men. And in the second place, every expert admits that many steps could be taken, which have not yet been taken, to render the army more attractive to recruits without extravagant cost to the taxpayer. To make barracks more comfortable, to make army-life in time of peace more enjoyable, to increase somewhat the pay of the private, to give him a training that will enable him to make his way when he returns to civil life—it will be time enough to talk of impressing soldiers when these expedients have been tried, and have failed to bring the required number of voluntary recruits.

Conscription, then, would entail a vastly increased charge on the national wealth. It would weaken the army by introducing large numbers of men to whom soldiering was distasteful. It would be a grave invasion of personal liberty. It would tend to destroy that independence of character which is among the most valuable of the country's assets. It would do much to familiarize the whole people with militarist ideas, and to implant in them a carelessness of human life. It would tend to make the foreign policy of England more bellicose. It would probably lower the standard of sexual morality. And, in addition to all this, it is wholly unnecessary. ✓

The question what is to be regarded as the right strength of our armaments is one that cannot be discussed in a book of this character. The standard must necessarily vary from time to time according to the naval, and to some extent the military, preparations made by other powers. We shall not be misrepresenting the feeling dominant in the Liberal party if we say that it is determined to allow no falling off in our defences beyond the point necessary for ample security against attack, but that it would equally resist any attempt to impose a burden of armament heavier than is needed for this.

Liberals would neither encourage military ardour in the nation to such a degree that the people should become inspired with the lust for glory in war, nor discourage military ardour to such a point that recruits for

the army and navy should cease to be forthcoming, or the fighting capacity of the British forces be destroyed. They would not exalt the profession of the soldier so far that it should be regarded as the "lordliest life on earth;" nor would they do anything to weaken the high and proper esteem in which the army and navy are held by the nation at large. And they do not fail to emphasize that commercial prosperity and a lofty national type are essential to defence.

"O'erweening statesmen have too long relied
On fleets and armies and external wealth,
But from within proceeds a nation's health."

They urge especially that a policy of social reform is not only just in itself, and not only useful to commerce, it is a defensive policy as well. For a race of workmen undersized, ill-fed, ignorant, will not produce effective soldiers and sailors;¹ a nation will not be a good fighting machine, any more than it will be a good wealth-producing machine, or a good colonizing agency, unless it is made of good material all through; and to encourage the growth of the rural population by better land laws, to improve the temperance of the people by better licensing laws, to improve the surroundings of the people by better housing laws, and to improve their intelligence

¹ Of the would-be recruits in 1899, 32 per cent. were rejected for physical unfitness.

Of those who were accepted, 34 per cent. were under the low standard now in force, and enlisted as "specials." (Capt. Markham Rose—Gold Medal Prize Essay on "The Lessons of the South African War." *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, May 1901, p. 572.)

"Out of rather more than 11,000 recruits who wished to enlist in Manchester in 1899, 8,000 had to be rejected on medical inspection." (Mr. G. F. Shee, *The Briton's First Duty*, p. 151.)

"No less than 48 per cent. of the men recruited disappear absolutely before the period of reserve service is reached. . . . The disappearance is partly owing to desertion, but much more largely to the enlistment of unfit men, who simply melt away or are discharged as invalids or unfit. . . . We lose during the seven years, the term of a soldier's military life, no less than 105,000 men." (Mr. H. O. Arnold-Forster, *The War Office, the Army and the Empire*, p. 62.)

by better laws of education, will do more to raise the efficiency of the army and navy than any merely numerical increase in the size of the forces.

With a view to relieving the immense and growing weight of the expenditure on armaments it is not unreasonable to look to the colonies for help. We may justly expect that the colonies, now that they are reaching manhood, should bear their share of the expenses of the joint household, and repay in some measure the debt which they owe to the mother-country who has tended and protected their youth. Their eagerness to help her with men and money in recent times of crisis has shown that it is by no means visionary to expect such assistance; and the time seems to be approaching when intermittent aids, valuable as they are, will be consolidated into a yet more valuable increase in the regular contributions of the colonies to the common defence.

At present the inhabitants of the United Kingdom pay towards the cost of Imperial defence thirteen times as much per head as the inhabitants of the great colonies.¹

But it must be recognized, however regretfully, that

¹	Population.	Defence Expenditure.
Canada	5,312,000	£424,000
Australasia	4,410,000	713,000
	9,722,000	£1,137,000

Charge per head of population, 2s. 4d.

	Population.	Defence Expenditure.
United Kingdom	41,000,000	£61,000,000

Charge per head of population £1 9s. 9d.

(See the *Canadian Handbook*, 1900, published by the Canadian Department of Agriculture; *A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia*, 1889-1900, p. 310.)

It should not be forgotten, further, that the English national debt, the annual charges of which have not been included in the above calculation, has been incurred largely through the wars which have made the existence of the colonies possible, while the crown lands in the colonies have been transferred to the local governments free from any charge on that account; also that the United Kingdom bears the whole cost of the diplomatic and consular staffs which are as much at the service of the colonies as of the mother-country.

though the burden of the Imperial armaments may be more widely shared, it cannot be greatly lessened except by agreement with other powers. The risk would be too great for England to diminish her forces to any large extent without simultaneous action on the part of her neighbours. The Liberal party would undoubtedly be active in forwarding any movement, if such seemed practicable, to reduce by common agreement the armaments of Europe, or to prevent their continuous, and now almost automatic, increase.¹

Meanwhile large armaments must be regarded as an unfortunate necessity—a necessity but still unfortunate, unfortunate but still a necessity. And so they will remain until a different spirit shall animate the nations. On the cannon of the Kings of France there was stamped the motto "*Ultima Ratio Regum*"—"The last argument of Kings." It may be that a day will come when a new motto, "*Ultima Ratio Populorum*"—"The last argument of Peoples"—will be more proudly stamped on the statute-books of International Law. ✓

¹ An interesting suggestion, based on a tentative step by the British Government, was made in a leading article in the *Westminster Gazette* (April 28, 1899), at the time of the Hague Conference. The mode of escape, said the writer of the article, may come
 L "by making it customary for Powers to negotiate their military and naval programmes one with the other. If instead of making a foolish secret of designs which every rival can immediately discover, we all frankly announce them and profess our willingness to forego them, if we can come to terms with our neighbours, we may year by year check the pace and gradually even arrive at reduction. The principle of the 'conditional estimate' laid down by Mr. Goschen in the House of Commons is, in our opinion, by far the most practical contribution to the Peace controversy that we have yet had. Our estimate, said Mr. Goschen, is such and such, but we will keep our money in our pockets if we can agree with our neighbours." ✓

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

THROUGH the middle of the nineteenth century, Liberalism was, in the main, dominant in England. Large practical benefits were the fruits of its power. Taxation was lightened. Education was improved. The physical condition of the people was bettered. Religious equality made rapid advance. On the foundations of the ancient liberties a stately structure of self-government was built. But the last fifteen years of the century showed a complete contrast. Except for a few small and easy reforms, nothing was done to complete the earlier work. Parliament has been sluggish in remedying abuses, and for half a generation the current of political progress has flowed intermittent and weak. Many powerful forces have combined to dam back the stream.

Liberalism has not only to meet reasoned objections to the specific measures it advocates; objections to its Labour policy, its Irish policy, its Church policy, its policy of constitutional reform. It has also to defend itself against the accusation that a Liberal ministry will be careless of Imperial interests. It has to make head against those who, for reasons of self-interest, oppose measures of reform;—against landowners who have a personal motive for resisting the amendment of the Land Laws; ground landlords in towns who have a personal motive for preserving their exemption from rating; men of large means whose purses would be touched by a true equality of taxation; brewers and publicans whose profits would be affected by reforms promoting temperance; hereditary legislators who have an interest in

maintaining hereditary legislation ; clergy of the Church of England who have an interest in maintaining State patronage of their Church ; Irish Protestants who have an interest in maintaining the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland ; employers of labour who imagine that the labour policy of the Liberal party would injure their prerogatives ; agriculturists who sigh for protection in order that their own incomes may grow at the cost of the rest of the nation ;—against all the many individuals, belonging to wealthy and powerful classes, who putting self before society, combine together to defend, or to create, profitable privileges. Liberalism has to fight against the non-political methods which are in these days being widely used to advance party ends ; its difficulties are great in those numerous constituencies where large subscriptions, given broadcast by the member or candidate to charities, churches and athletic clubs, are made to supply the place of political arguments, where the smoking concert and the club dinner are substituted for the public meeting and the pamphlet, and where the electors are being gradually taught to believe that wealth and good-fellowship are more desirable in a candidate than right political views and sound parliamentary knowledge. The Liberal party has to lift the deadweight of political indifference ; the apathy that comes either from natural indolence, or from a want of interest in measures of reform, due to ignorance of their value and necessity. It has to dispel that spirit of timidity which resists reasonable change for fear that unreasonable change may follow, seeing in every reform the thin end of some destructive wedge ; the spirit which in earlier days opposed an extension of the franchise for fear of mob rule, and now opposes social reform out of blind dread of socialism.

These are the formidable forces which bar the advance of Liberal policy. Skilfully organized, closely united, they have succeeded in their purpose. The long period of stagnation has been the proof of their success. The barrier cannot be pierced, and the course of progress resumed, without the persistent effort of a body of friends

of reform, larger in numbers than its opponents, as skilfully organized and as closely united as they, equally active in argument and equally zealous in propaganda.

It was once thought that a wide franchise would be a guarantee of continuous progress. But to perfect the machinery of government is one thing, to supply motive force is another. A constitution, however democratic in form, is no more than a hobby-horse, and it will carry us nowhere if we fail to make use of our legs. The success of political reform depends wholly on personal service ; and this book may be ended, not unfitly, perhaps, by an appeal to those who admit that Liberal principles are sound and Liberal proposals likely to be beneficial, to take an active part in the work of establishing those principles and realizing the proposals, in spite of the hostile influences which have of late been dominant.

"There are many well-meaning people in the world," Cobden once wrote, "who are not so useful as they might be from not knowing how to go to work." But those who wish to see the triumph of Liberal ideas, and to play a part in securing it, have an obvious road open before them.

The system of party has been established in England for more than two centuries. In spite of many drawbacks, its advantages and its necessity are such that the permanence of the system seems to be assured. Without great parties, the House of Commons would be a mere collection of discordant and shifting groups. Stability of government would be impossible. A ministry would never know at what moment some new combination of sections might oust it from power. The conduct of affairs, both home and foreign, would be worsened if, as in France in recent years, a rapid succession of different ministries, supported by different groups, directed in turn the departments of administration. The existence of permanent parties can alone give a guarantee of caution in adopting, and perseverance in advocating, proposals ; for the credit of a party demands that a cause once adopted should be urged, in spite of

difficulties and temporary defeats, until it is either carried to success or deliberately rejected by the people. The existence of parties forces political education on the electorate; their mutual competition compels them to become great propagandist associations, to use every means of stirring the indifferent, and to present their views in the most telling form to the whole body of the people. Their existence assures, better than any other means could do, a full consideration of difficult problems, and safeguards the country against the hurried adoption by Parliament of ill-digested measures. And the existence of parties is inevitable. The Conservative temper and the Liberal temper, the Conservative ideal and the Liberal ideal, Conservative methods and Liberal methods, differ fundamentally. In every Western country, in every age, and in every class, the cleavage between the quietist and the reformer is clearly seen. In England at this moment a gulf, as wide as in any previous time, separates the main bodies of the two great parties, and divides their actions in relation to democracy, in relation to the claims of social reform, even in relation to imperial and foreign policy. A ministry cannot fail to belong to one school or the other. It will attract to its support those of its own views. It will drive into opposition those who disagree with it; and if the existing parties were destroyed by some cataclysm in the political world, they could not fail to re-appear before long, under different names perhaps, but with the same predominant ideas as now, and to support the same respective policies. Parties are useful, necessary and likely to endure. Liberal aims must look for their fulfilment to the efforts of a Liberal party; and those who wish to support the aims must needs take their place in the ranks of the party. They will find there abundant opportunity for their utmost energies.

Local organizations are indispensable to a party. They are as necessary to it as regimental organizations to an army. They have the duty of choosing and supporting Parliamentary candidates; of watching the registration of voters; of spreading their views by public

meetings and political writings ; of helping to mould by their resolutions the immediate policy of the party as a whole. Whoever desires to see Liberal doctrines prevail in the government of the country will find that the weapon nearest to his hand is membership in the Liberal Association of his district.

If he has leisure and the necessary capacity he will qualify himself for election to Parliament or to some local authority ; for every practical politician knows that the number of persons from among whom candidates may be chosen is often unduly small. Though the harvest of good government might be plentiful the labourers are very few.

If he is no more than one of the rank and file, he may at least make constant use of the vote, and help, by conversation and by action, to swell the body of public opinion that favours progress.

The work to be done is vast. The forces that obstruct it are powerful. The need of helpers is great. Whoever agrees in the main with the views which have been summarized in these pages, whoever agrees that Liberal legislation and Liberal administration would be likely to add to the happiness of the British people, and of many outside the ranks of the British people, can he spend his energies better than in the service of this cause ? Some men take a worthy satisfaction in works of charity, open their purses and devote their leisure in aid of philanthropic agencies of relief. Many give money and time to the support of their Church. But social reform would do more for the poor than charity ; the principles that permeate a true Liberalism are nothing else than the application to public affairs of the religious spirit itself. Liberalism makes its appeal to no sordid instincts. The finest characteristics may find an outlet in its service.

INDEX

- ACCIDENTS, industrial, 90-2,
 122-4
 Afforestation, 129
 Age qualification, for franchise,
 242 *n.*
 Agents-General, 337 *n.*
 Agricultural Holdings Acts,
 111-3
 Agricultural Rating Acts, 179
 Agriculture, 103, 111-3; and
 Protection, 158, 162
 Alabama dispute, 361
 Aliens, 239 *n.*
 Annexations, 299, 325, 329 *n.*,
 330-3, 340-3
 Arbitration: in labour disputes,
 174; in international disputes,
 361-2
 Armaments, 177, 302, 338, 353,
 363-8, 375 *n.*, 376-9
 Army and Navy, cost of, 177,
 300-3, 367
 Army reform, 374-6
 Associations, political, 386
 Austria, armaments, 368 *n.*

 Bacon, Sir F., 314, 371
 Basis of Liberalism, 4
 Belgium, possessions, 332 *n.*
 Benefit theory, taxation, 183-6
 Bentham, 21, 225, 233
 Best life principle, 4, 8, 37, 207,
 225, 330
 Bishops, in House of Lords, 276
 Bismarck, 347
 Boarding-out system, 122
 Boer war, 344
 Booth, Charles: on poverty, 9,
 18 *n.* Old Age Pensions
 scheme, 142

 Bribery, 384
 Bright, 21, 225
 Brougham, 21
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. J., 307, 320 *n.*,
 321 *n.*
 Burke, 5, 337

 Campbell, Sir G., 308
 Cardwell, Mr., 365
 Carlyle, 25, 233, 360
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J., on
 Old Age Pensions scheme,
 140
 Charity, 121, 126
 Chartered Company of South
 Africa, 308
 Chatham, 327
 Child labour, 38-40, 42, 73-7,
 95
 Childers, Mr., 365
 Children, orphan and deserted,
 121, 122
 Church and State, 208-222, 276
 Citizenship, duties of, 36, 77,
 229, 387
 Closure, 179 *n.*, 282
 Cobden, 155, 225, 385; on Fac-
 tory Laws, 21; on universal
 Free Trade, 165 *n.*; on the
 Empire, 309; on the Navy,
 366
 Codification of Law, 176
 Collectivism, 149-152
 Colonies, British: Protection in,
 165; Customs Union with,
 167; and the Empire, 303-5,
 311, 316-8, 329 *n.*, 335-7, 378.
 See Imperial Defence, Im-
 perial Federation

- Commerce, 153—176; and education, 36; and shorter hours of labour, 81-3; commercial information, 154; Free Trade, 154—170; commercial confidence, etc., 170, 171; social reform, 134, 171, 181; technical education, 172; labour disputes, 173-5; Patent and Company law, 175; cost of Private Bills, 175; judicial system, 176; democracy and trade, 235-7; trade and the Empire, 311-5; and foreign policy, 348, 352
- Common lands, 97, 119
- Commons, House of, 254—265, 280-2
- Company laws, 175
- Compensation: for insanitary house property, 55, 57; for public-house licences, 66-9; for land needed for public purposes, 99—101; for farmers' improvements, 111-3; for damage done by game, 113; for urban tenants' improvements, 113-5; for accidents, 122-4, 137; for injuries to health, 123
- Compulsory military service, 369—379
- Conditions of employment, 13-17; 72—96; 122-7, 133-5, 146
- Conscription, 369—379
- Conservatism, 5, 171, 228, 267-9, 272, 383-4, 386
- Consular service, 154
- Corn Laws, 97, 154, 162
- Cosmopolitanism, 347—354, 363, 364
- Crime, 10, 14, 15, 36, 61, 181
- Cromwell, 327
- Customs tariffs, 154—170
- Dangerous trades, 90-2
- Death duties, 97, 188, 189
- Death-rate: and overcrowding, 50; in town and country, 50; from accidents, 90; in unhealthy trades, 92 *n.*; reduction in, 181 *n.*
- Defence, 177-8, 301, 306, 363—379
- Democracy, 225—238, 251, 330; education for, 35, 77, 228—234; results of, 24, 97, 225-8; objections to, 228—238; proposed extensions, 243—293; conscription, 371
- Denominational schools, 217—222
- Depression of trade, effects of, 125, 235
- Destitution, causes of, 120, 137
- Devolution, 280-4
- Dickens, 25
- Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C., 308 *n.*, 366
- Disendowment, 213-6
- Disestablishment, 208—217, 222
- Disraeli, 230, 328 *n.*
- Domestic reform and Imperialism, 301, 338
- Drink question, *see* Temperance
- Early closing, 28, 87—90
- Earned and unearned incomes, taxation of, 188
- Earth, land area, 323 *n.*
- Economy of high wages, 171
- Education: and citizenship, 35, 228—234; freedom of career, 35-6, 41; crime, 36; commerce, 36-7; character, 37; cost of education, 37-8; the State and the schools, 38; irregular attendance, 38, 42; duration of education, 39; teachers, 40, 219; illiteracy, 41, 285; secondary schools, 41-4; educational reforms, 42-45, 173, 221; temperance, 62; half-time system, 73-7; technical education, 172; religious, 214; voluntary schools, 40, 217—222; democracy, 228—234; Ireland, 285

- Educational tests for franchise, 230
 Efficiency of working-classes, 36, 37, 51 *n.*, 79, 80, 81, 171, 181, 373
 Egypt, 302 *n.*, 303 *n.*, 319, 322
 Eight hours' day, *see* Hours of labour
 Electorate, functions of, 229
 Eliot, George, 25
 Emigration, 315
 Empire, British; and Ireland, 285, 289; its composition, 305; area, 299, 323 *n.*, 341 *n.*
See Expansion, Imperialism
 Employers' Liability Act, 122-4
 Entail, 116-7
 Equal sacrifice, in taxation, 183-8, 194, 201
 Established Church, 208—222
 Estimates closed, 179 *n.*
 Ethics the foundation of politics, 5
 Evolutionary argument, 12, 17—20, 359
 Expansion of empire, 325, 329 *n.*, 339—343
 Expenditure: on education, 44, 45; on relief of unemployed, 132; growth of, 177—180; on social reform, 180-2; on Poor Law relief, 181; on restraint of crime, 181; local, 195
 Exports, *see* Imports
 Factory Acts, *see* Conditions of employment
 Fair Trade, 165
 "Fairness" in taxation, 183-8, 194
 Farm colonies for unemployed, 128
 Farm labourers: housing, 47-9, 59; decrease in numbers, 102; and small holdings, 103—111; and the vote, 226, 250
 Farmer and landlord, 111-3
 Finance, *see* Taxation
 Food supply, in time of war, 170, 316, 365
 Foreign policy, 346—354
 Foreign trade, *see* Commerce
 Forests, 129
 Foster, Sir W., 102 *n.*
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H., 189 *n.*
 Fox, 347
 France: area of empire, 323 *n.*, 332 *n.*; armaments, 368 *n.*
 Franchise: restrictions of, 239—242; reforms in, 243-5; women's, 245—253; native, 331. *See* Democracy, Reform Acts
 Franklin, Benjamin, 342
 "Free breakfast table," 192, 195
 Free Trade, 154—170
 Freedom of thought, 207
 Friendly societies, 16, 29, 141, 181
 Frontiers, of British Empire, 373
 Game Laws, 97, 98
 General Elections, 229, 255
 Germany, trade with, 156 *n.*; Protection in, 165; population, 316 *n.*; possessions, 332; armaments, 368
 Gibbon, 342
 Giffen, Sir R., 9, 126 *n.*, 189 *n.*, 190, 203; on surplus of imports, 157
 Gladstone, 225, 234, 291, 327 *n.*, 335, 347, 352, 361
 Godwin, 150, 225
 Gold, importation of, 158
 Goldie, Sir G., 306 *n.*
 Gomme, Mr., 198 *n.*, 203 *n.*
 Gordon, Gen., 307
 Gothenburg system, 70 *n.*
 Graduation, in taxation, 187, 191-5
 Greater Britain, 305
 Grey, Earl, 225
 Haggard, Mr. H. Rider, 106
 Hague Tribunal, 362

- Hamilton, Sir E., 203 *n.*, 205
 Health, 46—51, 77, 87-8, 90-2, 119, 121, 123, 181, 373, 377
 Hicks-Beach, Sir M.: on growth of expenditure, 179 *n.*
 "Home Rule All Round," 283
 Home work, 93, 94
 Hospitals, 121
 Hours of labour, 15, 27, 62, 77—89
 House of Commons, 254—265, 280-2
 House of Lords, 266—279
 Housing : overcrowding, 9, 46—51, 58 ; insanitation, 46-9, 58 ; rents, 46-7, 57 ; rural housing, 47-9, 55-9 ; health, 49—51 ; temperance, 49, 51, 63 ; improvement of communications, 52 ; land question, 52-8, 205 *n.* ; municipal building, 54-9 ; improvement of surroundings, 59, 60 ; Ireland, 285
 Hume, David, 230
 Hume, Joseph, 180
 Illiteracy, 41, 285
 Imperial Customs' Union, 167-9
 Imperial Defence, 301, 317, 336, 365-7, 378
 Imperial Federation, 282, 304, 335-7
 Imperialism, 289, 299—345 ; definitions of, 343-4
 Imports and exports : growth of, 155 *n.* ; between England and Germany, 156 *n.* ; the surplus of imports, 157
 Imports of agricultural produce, 107 *n.*, 159
 Improvement in condition of the people, 12—17, 137, 154
 Improvements, *see* Compensation
 Incidence of taxation : national, 189—191 ; local, 202-5
 Income, average of working-classes, 190
 Income-tax : growth of assessments, 155, 178 ; graduation, 192-5
 India, 232, 302 *n.*, 319, 322, 331, 335, 366, 373
 Individualism, 12, 20—31, 184-5
 Insanity, 61, 239 *n.*, 285
 Insurance : against unemployment, 127 *n.* ; against old age, 139
 International Arbitration, 361
 Ireland : cottages built by local authorities, 54 ; licensing, 64 *n.*, 70 *n.* ; redistribution, 256 ; local self-government, 282—293 ; economic condition, 284
 Irish Church, disestablishment of, 215 *n.*
 Italy, armaments, 368 *n.*
 Jevons, on limits of State action, 30
 "Jingoism," 325, 329, 339—343, 345, 351
 Johnston, Sir H., 319 *n.*, 320 *n.*
 Kant, 248
 Kingsley, Miss, 320 *n.*
 Labour disputes, 173-5
 Labour registries, 134
Laissez-faire, 12, 20—31
 Land Law Reform Association, 49 *n.*, 116 *n.*, 205 *n.*, 206 *n.*
 Land nationalization, 98—101
 Land of United Kingdom, area, 97
 Land question : 97—119 ; rural depopulation, 50 *n.*, 102-5 ; housing, 52-8 ; small holdings, 102—111 ; law of landlord and tenant, agricultural, 111-3 ; urban, 113-5 ; entail and settlement, 116 ; land transfer, 117 ; primogeniture, 118 ; protection of commons, 119 ; public acquisition of land, 119 ; the unemployed problem, 127—133 ; unearned

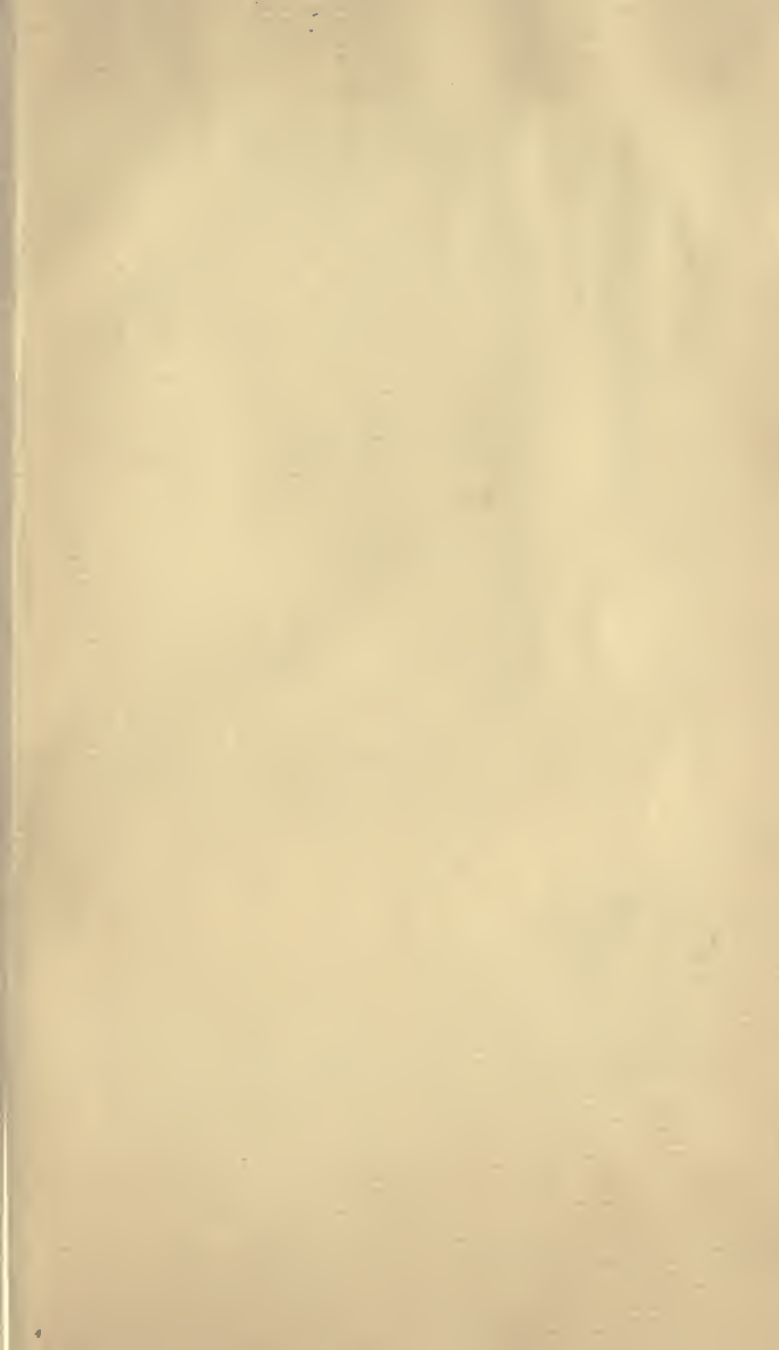
- increment, 197—201 ; rating of land values, 201-6 ; Ireland, 236-7, 286
 Land Restoration League, 98—100
 Law, improvements in, 175
 Lead-workers, 92 *n.*
 Leasehold enfranchisement, 114—116
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H., 65 *n.*, 236, 255 *n.*
 Legal procedure, 176
 Lewis, Sir G. Cornewall, 294
 Liberal Government of 1892-5, 22, 277
 Liberty, 26-8, 64, 84-6, 226, 286, 289, 323, 330, 348, 371
 Libraries, 44
 Licensing, *see* Temperance
 Liquor, sale of, to natives, 306, 334
 "Little Englanders," 309, 325, 329, 338-9, 345
 Loans, for building, 55-7
 Local authorities, and rating of land values, 206
 Local government : 282—293 ; educational authorities, 43-4, 173, 221 ; conditions of employment, 96 ; municipalization of industries, 145-9
 Local Option, 65, 66
 Local Taxation, 195—206
 Lock-outs, 173-5
 Lodger franchise, 240-1
 Londonderry, Lord, 273 *n.*
 Lords, House of, 266—279
 Lucas, Mr. C. P., 321 *n.*, 341 *n.*
 Lugard, Sir F., 320 *n.*, 321 *n.*
 Manchester school, 20-9, 153, 300, 327 *n.*
 Manhood suffrage, 239—243
 Marshall, Prof., 78, 203 *n.*
 Marx, 150
 Matabele, 308, 321 *n.*, 331
 Meat, consumption of, 285
 Melbourne, Lord, 327
 Meredith, Mr., 364
 Merivale, 307
 Metternich, 347
 Military expeditions, 303 *n.*
 Militia ballot, 369
 Mill, J. S., 30 *n.*, 200, 204 *n.*, 214, 225, 230, 251, 259 *n.*, 333
 Milner, Lord, 320 *n.*
 Mines : Regulation Acts, 72, 91, 92 ; Eight Hours' Bill, 77, 86
 Monarchy, 294-5
 Monopolies, 145-6
 Moral philosophy, teaching of, 6
 Mulhall, Mr., 81 *n.*, 285 *n.*
 Municipal corporations, Association of, 205
 Municipalization : of public-houses, 70 *n.* ; of industries, 145-9
 Napoleon, 351
 National Debt, 177, 378 *n.*
 National schools, 218 *n.*
 Native races and the Empire, 305-9, 318—322, 330-5, 342
 Naval stations, 302 *n.*, 316
 Navy, size of, 302, 365-6
 Negroes, 306-8, 320-2, 331, 334
 Newcastle, Duke of, 280
 Nonconformity, 209—211, 215, 218, 221
 Old age, poverty in, 13, 14, 135
 Old Age Pensions, 135—144
 Older Liberalism, 20, 21, 186, 232, 254
 "One man, one vote," 243-5
 "One vote, one value," 255-7
 Opposition to Liberalism, 383
 Organization, party, 242, 386
 Overcrowding, *see* Housing
 Parliaments, duration of, 254
 Party system, 385
 Patent law, 175
 Pauperism, 9, 14, 61, 121, 126, 135-7, 143, 181, 239 *n.*
 Payment : of members, 257—265 ; of official election expenses, 258—261

- Peace, 309, 318, 322, 340, 349—354, 355—362
 "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform," 4, 180, 364
 Peasant farmers, 102—111
 Peel, Sir R., on commercial treaties, 167
 Penal colonies, 133
 Pensions for aged poor, 135—144
 Pepys, 264
 "Philosopher Kings," 227
 "Philosophic Radicals," 21, 24, 153
 Philosophy, references to writers on, 6
 Plural Voting, 243-5
 Poor Law, 9, 14, 18, 121, 126, 136, 143
 Population of United Kingdom, 155, 178 *n.*, 316 *n.*; number of wage-earners, 126, 189 *n.*, 235; number of adult males, 189 *n.*; population of British Empire, 229, 341 *n.*; Ireland, 284; Russia and Germany, 316 *n.*
 Post Office, 145-6
 Poverty, extent of, 9, 10, 285; causes of, 18, 19, 61
 Primogeniture, 118
 Principle, the first, 3-7, 207, 225, 330, 347
 Private Bills, 175, 283
 Private members' Bills, 281
 "Professional politicians," 261-4
 Property, rights of, 119, 171, 234-8
 Protection, 154—170
 Public works, for unemployed, 131
 Qualifications: for franchise, 230, 232, 235, 240-3; for House of Commons, 258—265
 Railway nationalization, 147, 149
 Rateable value, growth of, 195, 198
 Rates, 195—206
 Rating of land values, 53, 196—206
 Redistribution, 255-7
 Reeves, Hon. W. P., 193 *n.*, 328 *n.*
 Reform Acts, consequences of, 23, 97, 226, 233, 239
 Registration laws, 240-3
 Registries, labour, 134
 Religious Equality, 207—222, 279
 Republicanism, 225 *n.*, 294
 Retaliatory customs duties, 166
 Returning officers' charges, 258—261
 Robespierre, 344
 Rowntree, B. S.: on poverty in York, 9
 Rural depopulation, 50 *n.*, 102-5
 Ruskin, 25
 Russell, Lord John, 225, 287, 327, 347, 352
 Russell, of Killowen, Lord, 361
 Russia, population 316 *n.*; area, 323 *n.*; armaments, 368 *n.*
 Salisbury, Lord: on growth of expenditure, 178 *n.*; on conscription, 369 *n.*
 Sanitation; *see* Health, Housing
 Savings banks, deposits in, 155 *n.*
 Schlich, Dr., 131
 Schools: elementary, 38—42; secondary, 41-4; technical, 172; voluntary, 40, 217—222
 Scottish legislation, 282
 Sea, command of the, 302, 365-6
 Second chambers, 266—272
 Sedan, 357
 Self-government: principle of, 225—238; in Ireland, 284—293; in British colonies, 304, 335-7; in British dependencies, 305, 330-3
 Service franchise, 240-1
 Settlements, land, 116-7
 Shee, Mr. G. F., 369 *n.*
 Shipping, British, 157

- Shop employment, 28, 87—90
 Sickness, *see* Health
 Single chamber, 267, 270
 Single tax, 99, 100
 Slave trade, 320
 Small holdings, 102—111
 Smith, Adam, 21, 147, 203 *n.*
 Smoke prevention, 59
 Social reform, 8—11, 19, 22, 23, 171, 180-2, 184-5, 196, 279, 301-3, 338, 373, 377
 Socialism, 5, 149—152, 237
 Soudan, 304 *n.*, 320, 331
 South African wars, 177, 303 *n.*, 316, 344
 Spalding, Mr. T. A., 274 *n.*, 283 *n.*
 Spencer, Herbert, 17, 37
 Spencer, Lord, 365
 "Stake in the country," 234
 State : its purpose, 4—6 ; activity of, 22-3 ; meaning of the term, 24 ; its character changed, 23 ; limits of its action, 29, 147—152, 207—212
 State Children's Association, 122 *n.*
 State employment, 83, 84, 95, 96, 146
 State interference, 12, 20—31, 64, 84—86, 136, 207—212, 286
 State trading, 145-9
 Strikes, 27, 84, 173-5
 Suez Canal shares, 302 *n.*
 Suffrage, *see* Franchise
 Sugar, consumption of, 155 *n.*
 "Survival of the fittest," 12, 17—20, 359
 Sweating system, 93
 Tariff wars, 167
 Taxation : 177—206 ; by Customs duties, 164 ; principles of, 183-8, 194 ; incidence of national taxation, 189—192 ; "free breakfast table," 192, 195 ; graduated income-tax, 192-5 ; local taxation, 195 ; rating of land values, 196—206
 Tea, consumption of, 155 *n.*
 Teachers, 40, 219
 Technical education, 103, 159, 172, 183
 Temperance : extent and effects of intemperance, 61, 78 ; Prohibition, 62 ; reforms proposed, 62-4, 66, 69—71 ; temperance question and housing, 49, 51, 63 ; compensation, 66-9
 Ten Hours' Bill, 21
 Tenants' compensation for improvements, 111-5
 Tenure, security of, 47, 48, 59, 110
 Thomson, Joseph, 306
 Timber, importation of, 131
 Tithe Rent-charge Rating Act, 179
 Tithes, 209, 213
 Towns, embellishment of, 59, 196
 Trade, *see* Commerce
 Trade and the Flag, 312
 Trade diseases, 91-2
 Trade option, in shortening hours, 82
 Trade Unionism, 16, 26, 27, 29, 49, 77, 84, 127 *n.*, 134
 Transfer of Land, 117-8
 Trusts, and Protection, 161
 Unearned incomes, taxation of, 188
 Unearned increment, 116 *n.*, 197—201
 Unemployed : effects of irregular work, 62 ; the unemployed problem, 124-6 ; proposals for relief, 127—135
 Union, Act of, 256 *n.*
 United States : Protection in, 165 ; relations with England, 284, 289, 352-3, 361 ; area, 322 *n.*
 University representation
 Voluntary schools, 217—

- Wage-earners, number of, 126
n.
 Wages, rise in, 15, 137
 War, 351-2, 355-362. *See*
 Defence, Food supply, Peace
 Washington Treaty, 361
 Waste of labour force: through
 bad housing, 51 *n.*; through
 labour disputes, 174; through
 sickness, 181 *n.*; through
 conscription, 370
 Waste land, utilization of, 129
 Wealth, national, 178, 285
 Webb, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney, 73
 n., 79 *n.*, 127 *n.*, 146 *n.*, 205 *n.*
 Welby, Lord, 189 *n.*
 Wellington, Duke of, 78, 233,
 272, 328
 West Africa, 307 *n.*, 315 *n.*, 331
Westminster Gazette, 379 *n.*
 Wilkinson, Mr. Spencer, 366
 Women's labour, 14, 91, 95
 Women's suffrage, 245-253
 Workhouses, 121, 122, 126
 Working-classes: taxation, 188-
 192; average income, 190.
 See Efficiency
 Zollverein, 167-9
 Zulus, 303 *n.*, 321 *n.*, 331





14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

REC'D LD	INTER LIBRARY LOAN
APR 10 1962	ONE MONTH AFT. 2 OCT 1969
30 APR '62 DH	NON-RENEWABLE
REC'D LD	OCT 28 1969
MAY 1 1962	JUL 30 1988
22 Mar '64 C	AUTO DISC. AUG 29 '88
REC'D LD	
APR 23 '64 - 8 AM	
INTER-LIBRARY LOAN	
OCT 28 1969	
10 May '65 J7	
REC'D LD	
MAY 17 '65 - 3 PM	

LD 21A-50m-3,'62
(C7097s10)476B

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

YB 08639

158455

JN 1129

L 382

158455

Samuel.

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARY



